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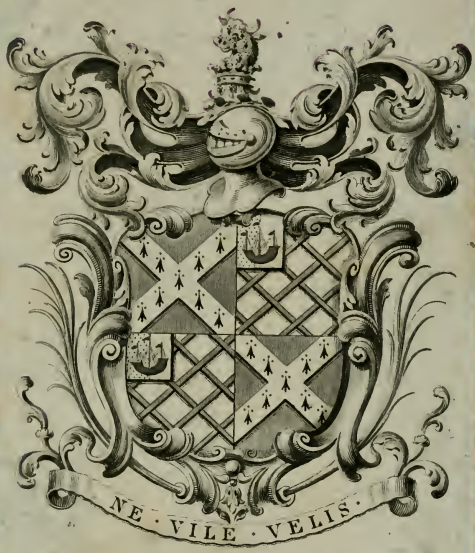

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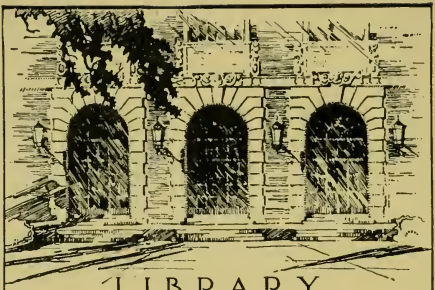

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TWO GENERATIONS;

OR,

BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND EDUCATION.

A NOVEL.

BY THE EARL OF BELFAST.

Ætatis cujusque notandi sunt tibi mores.
HORACE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. II.

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GENERATION THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

"Gentlemen, welcome! 'tis a word I use;
From me expect no further compliment;
Nor do I name it often at one meeting;
Once spoke, to those who understand me best,
And know I always purpose as I speak,
Hath ever yet sufficed."

The late Lancashire Witches, a Comedy,

BY T. HAYWOOD AND R. BROOME.

HOSPITALITY is nowhere better understood than in Wales. The Welsh attach, perhaps, a little too much importance to

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r."

There is probably a little too much of the

pride of birth and descent in their composition; and they will tell you too long a tale about ancestors, with names made up of l's, and r's, and h's, and w's, as impracticable to the mouth as to the memory.

Yet the Welsh are an interesting race, and have kept their nationality surprisingly long. It is curious to find, so near to our unromantic England, a nation which has preserved its customs, its traditions, its costume, and, above all, its language, through so many ages. Alas! that individuality (the fall of which in every country is a source of regret) is fast fading, in Wales as elsewhere. Does not the Turk doff his superb and graceful dress, and array himself in a hideous medley of fez, and tail-coat? Does not the olive-complexioned Spanish lady lay aside her mantilla for the pink bonnet, and the paletôt? And shall the Welsh alone retain

their peculiarities? It is much to be feared that in spite of the "*Oysterfods*" (I despair of writing the word correctly), established for the keeping up of national music, and the national tongue, these relics of past grandeur, these sounds of other days, will be buried in the excavations, and drowned by the whistle of the all-levelling railroad!

In one of the northern counties of Wales stood Llarnwair, the seat of the hospitable Mr. Jones. From those massive iron gates, the poor man never departed hungry. Mr. Jones loved to keep up old feudal customs; he was very rich, and his greatest delight was to cultivate his land, (paying his labourers with over-generosity), and to receive all friends who could be induced to visit him at Llarnwair. And, indeed, those who had once been his guests, needed not such entreaty to return; for both he and his

excellent wife knew well how to make their house agreeable to all. There were field-sports for those who liked to pursue them, house amusements for such as preferred these, an excellent library for the literary, and, above all, perfect liberty to do whatever each preferred, without an observation, and without solicitations to join this or that particular party, or take place in this or that sport.

The host and hostess of Llarnwair had discovered that every man's greatest happiness consists in the power of following his own inclinations; and therefore they left these unfettered, affording each the means of gratifying his particular taste.

Moreover, as the railroads had not yet reached them, and it really was a journey from any place to Llarnwair, situated as it was among the mountains of North Wales,

he would admit of no short visits, no "coming for a couple of nights," no staying a week, and then packing up, when you are just so much at home as to be really comfortable. He used to say:

"Llarnwair is a very difficult place to find the way to, but the way out is twenty times more puzzling."

And so he assembled yearly a party of his friends who remained with him for a month or two, and were all made to swear that they would meet again in the same place next year.

He had known poor Edward Tyrell well, and had been acquainted with his father before him; and both Edward and his wife had tasted the hospitality of Llarnwair; and so the kind-hearted old gentleman, hearing that the orphan child of his former friends was now a fine girl of one-and-twenty, and lived

with her relations, he addressed the following letter to her:

"Dear Miss Tyrell,

"Excuse this form of address from an old friend of your father's, and grandfather's, though he has not as yet the pleasure of being acquainted with you.

"This pleasure, however, is one which he very much desires, and is in fact the object of his addressing you. If you could pay us a visit here any time during this month, with a promise of remaining with us not less than six weeks, you will delight both Mrs. Jones and myself, who will find much gratification in receiving a daughter of our valued friend, Edward Tyrell.

"I am informed that you reside with your uncle. If you could induce him, and Mrs. St. Meurice, to accompany you, we

should offer them a warm welcome; but should it not be convenient for them to do so, we trust they will not hesitate to confide you to our care. We fully appreciate the value of the charge, and will endeavour to fulfil it to the best of our power.

"Believe me, dear Miss Tyrell,

"Very sincerely yours,

"WILLIAM AP. JONES."

"Llarnwair,

"June, 1845."

This letter reached Edith very opportunely.

The —th was quartered in a manufacturing town, where the air was most unhealthy, and disagreed very much with both Florence and Edith. The offer of change of air under such pleasing circumstances was

not to be refused; and it was agreed that Edith should accept Mr. Jones's invitation, and start for Llarnwair as soon as possible. Florence would gladly have accompanied her, for she suffered much from a cough, which she had never been able to shake off since the previous winter. Henry was much alarmed about it; he remembered that Mrs. Meynell had been carried off by a pulmonary complaint, and Florence's frequent and painful cough caused him serious anxiety. A stranger who had not seen her for two years, would have perceived a great change in her. Her fine, tall figure was attenuated; and in truth she felt more ill than she chose to confess.

It was, however, impossible for St. Meurice to obtain leave of absence at this moment, as many of the officers were away, and of course Florence would not leave him; so it

was settled that Edith, accompanied by an old servant, who had been in her father's service, should set out on her journey to Llarnwair.

CHAPTER II.

"Are not wholesome airs . . .
. . . . and clear suns . . . . .
And groves . . . . secure
From clamour, and whose very silence charms—
To be preferred to smoke, to the eclipse
That metropolitan volcanoes make,
Whose Stygian throats breathe darkness all day long
And to the stir of commerce, driving slow,
And thundering loud with his ten thousand wheels?"

COWPER.

THE charms of a good country house were as yet unknown to Edith. Her life had hitherto been passed either in barracks or in

small lodgings in garrison towns; so that the beauties of scenery, the sociality of a well-composed party, and the grand style in which matters were carried on at Llarnwair, all these had for her not only their intrinsic merits, but also the charm of novelty.

She soon found herself quite at home with the hospitable and kind Joneses, and found much pleasure in the society of many of their guests. She never grew weary of admiring the scenery in the neighbourhood, and the fine old house itself offered her many sources of gratification.

It was a large castellated building, quadrangular in form, and having at each corner of the square a massive tower, which gave to the whole building a most imposing air of solidity. The place was not without its legends and historic associations, and many a tale of royalty received and protected within

its walls, could be told by Mr. Jones. But we will not ask him to relate one, for this is his favourite topic, and he is apt to become prosy in enlarging upon it. Let us draw upon our imagination for such romantic scenes, and admire with Edith the beautiful spot whereon this noble pile is situated.

Behind the house rises an enormous mountain, forming a fit background to such a picture; for the dark green of the firs with which it is planted throws out the building in bold relief. A torrent rushes wildly down this mountain, and is perceived from the terrace of Llarnwair in one spot, where the ground recedes suddenly, and the stream has a fall of some twenty or thirty feet. At the foot of the mountain its course takes a sudden turn, and, joined by another stream, it flows placidly beneath the terrace. The house itself stands very high, and commands

a magnificent view; the park is very extensive, and its highly-cultivated appearance forms a most pleasing contrast with the rugged and wild scenery behind the house, while in the extreme distance may be obtained a glimpse of the sea.

Edith was far from accomplished, but she had much natural talent for drawing, and her sketch-book soon became enriched with many a representation of this lovely place and its romantic vicinity.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Jones showed particular attention and kindness to their young guest. They perceived that she was unaccustomed to mix much in society, and endeavoured to guard her against the little annoyances to which a person in that position is exposed. They told her not only the names, but also something of the character and position of each person staying in the

house; and Edith possessed much innate tact, though she had no great experience in the ways of the world.

Whenever any addition to the party was expected, Mrs. Jones gave Edith some little account of the new guests, and indicated to her the topics on which they were most capable of conversing with pleasure and facility.

"We are expecting two of the officers of the regiment now quartered at F——" (the town nearest to Llarnwair), said Mrs. Jones to Edith one morning shortly after her arrival. "They are coming to stay a week here, and will, I think, prove an acquisition. Lord Charles Winslow is rather agreeable and clever; he has travelled much, and relates his adventures pleasantly enough. The other is a great friend of his: Captain Marley. We are but very slightly acquainted

with him; but he is, I am told, very fascinating, and I can answer for his being remarkably handsome, though I have seen him but once."

"Do not fear, dear Mrs. Jones," replied Edith, "I am too much used to barrack life to be dazzled by red coats and gold epaulettes."

"There is more than a red coat to be feared in this case; there is a certain romantic interest about him, which has won hearts more impregnable than yours, I am told."

"I have now less reason for alarm," said Edith. "No man shall win my heart who has won many others. I must have one all to myself. Besides you know, dear Madam," added she, smiling, "I have made a vow of celibacy."

"Such vows are oftener broken than kept at your age, dear child. But how we have

taken this matter in earnest! as if it really were a settled thing, that you were to fall desperately in love with Captain Marley!"

When Edith came down to dinner, she found the new guests in the drawing-room; but she had scarcely time to look at them, before dinner was announced.

Mr. Jones, of course, headed the procession, and the others paired off as well as they could, or rather with that regularity which becomes routine in a country house.

The two officers remained the last with Edith and Mrs. Jones. The fair-haired one stood by the hostess, so Edith concluded that he was Lord Charles. The dark one advanced towards her, offered his arm, and went in the direction of the dining-room,

followed by Mrs. Jones and Lord Charles Winslow.

The party was a large one, and mustered some four-and-twenty strong, so that each couple was as much alone as if they had been *en tête-à-tête*. Edith found her neighbour conversational and agreeable, though far from talkative. On the contrary, he appeared rather reserved; but when he did make an observation, it was always an apt one; and there was an originality in his form of expression, which, with a very slight foreign accent, and a deep melodious voice, interested his hearers, and made them wish that he would speak oftener than he was in the habit of doing.

They talked, of course, of the beauties of Llarnwair, and she perceived that he fully sympathized with her in her extreme admiration of the Welsh scenery.

"It is a great boon to us to be quartered in such a district as this, with a picturesque country and kind neighbours; we have not often such good fortune; for it is frequently the fate of line regiments to be kept in manufacturing cities, and you can form an idea of the misery of such places."

"Indeed I can," replied Edith. "I have just come from one of the worst towns of that sort in England. My uncle is quartered at M——, and has been there for two years."

"And do you not doubly value the return to the country, when you have been long in such a place?"

"I can scarcely call this my *return* to the country, since I have seen but little of it before; but I admire its beauties, I assure you—perhaps the more, because they are so new to me."

Captain Marley turned to look at her:

"Is it possible," said he, "that you have passed your youth, your childhood, in the impure air of a city? Have you never known those childish raptures—those foretastes of the artist's future pleasures, which cannot be felt save in the wide fields? have you not felt these? Oh! these are the pleasures for which I, in my childhood, so often sighed in vain; these childish delights form the one pure drop in the cup of disappointment, anxiety and care, which holds the life-draught of men, and which I have tasted!"

He appeared rather to have involuntarily spoken his thoughts aloud, than to have addressed Edith; and, after a pause, he resumed the conversation in a more subdued tone.

"If you admire the beauties of nature so truly, how you would love the scenery of the Apeninnes! Nothing that I have seen can

be compared to them in grandeur, nor yet in softness and gracefulness. I have seen the Alps, but they are almost too stupendous for human admiration; they astound rather than please, their barrenness leaves a feeling rather of awe than of delight; but the purple cloud that gathers over the mountains of Italy, the sun dyeing their tops with endless hues, the soft balmy air, all this conveys a soothing influence to the mind, and leaves there an impression of serene happiness, not untinged with melancholy. This recollection makes me regret Italy, which, but for its natural beauties I should not have been sorry to leave."

"Not sorry to leave Italy!" exclaimed Edith, "I should have judged you differently; and should certainly have said that nothing could have grieved you more."

"There are sometimes associations connected even with the most charming places,

that cause us to forget their natural beauties, so far even as to have an antipathy to them."

"I have never experienced that feeling," said Edith.

"And may you never experience it," added Marley, impressively. "It is the feeling of one born in the midst of disappointments and anxieties, which will, I trust, never fall to your lot."

The tone of Captain Marley's conversation interested Edith, and she used her endeavours to keep it up during the remainder of dinner time. She had never before met one of those men who seem to take a woman's sympathies by storm. Her uncle was kind and amiable to a fault, but far from clever; and she had seldom heard any conversation of a higher order than the vapid talk of St. Meurice's brother officers.

Marley, on the other hand, was fascinated, as is often the case with clever men of the world, by her *naïveté;* and found her an excellent listener to the accounts of the Italian towns, churches, and pictures, he had visited, and which formed a topic of deep interest to her.

When the ladies left the dinner-table, they proceeded to discuss, round the dining-room fire, the newly-arrived visitors. Mrs. Jones declared that she had found Lord Charles very agreeable, and added that she thought him very good-looking."

Mrs. Morgan declared she did not admire those tall, florid young men, and that she thought Captain Marley fifty times as good-looking.

The young ladies all cried out in chorus that he was *so* handsome.

"Such beautiful eyes!" said one.

"Such magnificent teeth!" added another.

"Such glossy black hair!" suggested a third.

"Such a clever brow!"

"And such a passionful, and expressionful face!" aded one tall young lady, who had been reading Carlyle's "Hero Worship."

O, profanation! that a man should venture to penetrate into the great Elusinian mystery of the nineteenth century — the sacred half-hour which the ladies pass alone when they leave us to mourn their absence from the dinner-table! Pardon this presumption, gentle ones, none can judge of another but by his own feelings; and *we* know full well that, when you are not with us, our greatest happiness is to conjure up your image, and find consolation for your departure in speaking of you.

Having shown what the ladies said of the gentlemen; let us see the other side of the picture.

The evening passed in general conversation, in forming Mr. Jones's invariable rubber; while some of the young ladies tickled the piano, and made attempts more or less successful at singing.

Bed-time arrived, and Mr. Jones conducted the officers to their rooms.

They found that these adjoined, and that moreover there was a door of communication. So Lord Charles entered the room appropriated Marley, and they discussed the events of the evening over a good fire, which blazed and crackled merrily in the grate.

"I really must scold you, Valerian, my dear fellow, for your sombre looks, and your silence ever since dinner; you really must

not give way to these low spirits. You are not angry with me, I hope, for insisting on your accompanying me on my visit here?"

"By no means," replied Marley; "I like the house much, and our good hosts more. They seem excellent people; and I am really obliged to you for your introduction. I protest I did my best to make a show of good spirits; and indeed, Charles, it is not my fault if I did not succeed. But it really is with me as I told you; the air of this sort of place increases my heaviness. I find no pleasure in the society of a parcel of worldly, silly girls, who try to win a man's attention by boring him with phrases of the most commonplace order, or with borrowed scraps of assumed sentimentality."

"Determined woman-hater!" laughingly exclaimed Charles. "You will at least con-

fess that there is much beauty amongst the guests of Llarnwair."

"Beauty," said Marley, "in the true sense —no; prettiness if you like; but what is beauty, and what is prettiness? Was not Eve a beauty? and did she not—so they say at least—cause the perdition of all mankind? No, Charles, mark me, I am not mistaken in my appreciation of women. I admire them extremely, when they are beautiful; but I keep clear of the rock on which so many have split—not from caution—that quality does not I fear enter into my composition; but because I have always found those whom I have known, fall so short of my idea what a woman should be."

"They have their imperfections doubtless," said Charles; "but are we men exempt from them?"

"Assuredly not; but the faults of men

are of a more forgiveable nature than the defects of women. Men are often reckless and violent, and possess many other faults; but they mostly preserve a good heart, and almost always fix their affections on some object: sometimes an unworthy one, I confess, but still an object. Whereas women fix their love on themselves, their admiration on themselves; they are a selfish and ungrateful race . . ."

"Mercy, mercy for the dear creatures," interrupted Lord Charles, with a laugh; "you are really too hard upon them, and condemn the whole sex, because you chance to have met a few unfavourable specimens."

"I do not mean to say that there are not bright exceptions, my dear Charles. I speak of them, as I do of all other things, merely

as I have found them. I attach no value whatever to other men's opinions on this, or indeed on any matter; one day of experience teaches more than a library of precepts."

"You are very young, Valerian, to have acquired such misanthropic views of men and manners, or rather of women and manners. I am, I believe, your equal in years, and I have found life agreeable enough. I do certainly wish my governor would allow me a little more of the necessary, but notwithstanding that, I find I get on very well; and there is a certain excitement even in being hard up now and then."

"My life has not been a very long one," replied Marley, "nor an eventful one. Its story might be told in few words. But I have thought much, and this world, as it is,

will not bear much thinking on. Depend upon it, those find its path smoothest, who either cannot, or are not disposed to reflect. Reflection shows you the hollowness of all that is regarded as pleasure, shows you the deceitfulness of men, the hypocrisy and ingratitude of women."

"I see you are in one of your dolorous moods, so I shall leave you, and go to bed," said Lord Charles, rising. "Try and sleep well, and wake with a brighter train of thoughts. You did not think so badly of the pretty girl whom you took down to dinner, I fancy; for I saw you talking quite earnestly to her all the time you were at table."

"Well, I must say for her, that she is one of the most unaffected girls I ever met. Do you know her name?"

"What! did not your curiosity even prompt you to ask that question? I can tell you, for I made the inquiry of Mrs. Jones, impelled to do so by the fact of seeing you were more deeply engaged in conversation with her, than it is often your wont to be with ladies. She is a Miss Tyrell. There is some very fearful and romantic story about her birth. It appears that her father and mother both died on the night she was born. They were friends of the Joneses, and she is here on a long visit."

"What a sad story," said Marley, with a sigh. "She has suffered the severest deprivation that a human being can feel. I envy every one who has known his parents. Had I been blest with a knowledge of mine, I might have been a different man from what I am now."

"Well, good night to you, old fellow—keep your spirits up, and we'll cure your melancholy for you some day or other."

They shook hands, and the door between their rooms was closed.

CHAPTER III.

"Men's minds are for the most part of the same clay. Education is the potter's hand and wheel that forms them into vessels of honour and dishonour . . . . Most certain it is, that without education we are as good as lost in our very cradles; for whatever principles we make choice of in our infancy, we carry for the most part to the grave."

SIR T. POPE BLOUNT. *Essays.*

"Womannes conseils ben ful often cold;
Womannes conseils brought us first to wo,
And made Adam from Paradise to go,
Then as he ful mery and wel at ese.
But for I no 't,* to whom I might displese,

* Know not.

If I conseil of woman wolde blame,
Passe over, for I said it in my game.
Rede auctours, where they trete of swiche matere,
And what they sayn of women ye mown here."*

CHAUCER.

"Nous n'acquérons guères de connoissances nouvelles, que pour nous désabuser de quelques illusions agréables; et nos lumières sont presque toujours aux dépens de nos plaisirs."

D'ALEMBERT.

THERE exist certain precepts and truths, the inculcation of which into the mind of youth forms a part of the system of a well-ordered education. Whether these precepts, if presented to us at a more advanced period of life, could bear the test of logical investigation, and whether experience does not tend to show us many fallacies they contain—is a matter not here to be discussed. Certain it

* Are able to hear.

is that the youthful mind receives the impress deeply; and that, in after life, we retain the habit of looking to them as the landmarks that must form our guiding points. In characters capable of much reflection or great penetration, the insight which they gain into the motives and principles of other men, will, unquestionably, have the effect of effacing gradually the impression thus produced; but with the generality of mankind, that which has been instilled into the mind when young, continues to exert its influence over the conduct in more advanced years.

"So we believe, because we were so bred."

But in the case of an imperfect, or neglected education, the converse of the proposition is seen. The mind was not moulded into form while it was yet capable

of receiving a shape, the uneducated man who is gifted with great powers of reason, forms his own opinions on men and manners without the assistance of such precepts as have been referred to; and the result is almost invariably the same—a cynical opinion of his fellow-men, and scepticism on all points connected with religion.

Strange! that the tendency of master-minds should be towards infidelity and rationalism. And yet how does the history of past ages establish this a fact!

This was in some degree the case with Valerian Marley. He had received an education little calculated to train to its proper growth a mind like his. A superior natural intelligence had given him an early insight

into the emptiness and superficiality of the mummeries which he had not ceased to witness in the monastery in which he had been brought up; he had never known his parents, and had been consigned to the care of some Franciscan friars, whose monastery lay at the foot of the Apennines. They had ever used their utmost endeavours to persuade him to join their order, but his high spirit never permitted him for a moment to entertain such a proposition.

He had seen much to admire in the true spirit of devotion which many of these venerable men evinced; but his imagination had pictured to him beauties and pleasures which he felt he could neither see nor taste within the high walls that shut out the world from his curious gaze.

He had but two sources of real gratification during his confinement, and these served only

to enlighten him as to the beauties he might find beyond the narrow bounds that enclosed him.

In the chapel was a beautiful picture, before which he would, when a child, stand for hours, gazing on it with intense earnestness. It stood over the altar, and represented a Madonna and child. It was supposed to be a Raffalle, and was certainly worthy even of the divine artist. The Virgin was drawn standing, a full-length figure, and holding the child in her arms. Her head was turned partly away, and was raised towards a luminous point in the heavens, where might be discovered the shadow of an angel's figure. On her face beamed an expression of intense joy and thankfulness, and she seemed to address the angel in a tone of gratitude, while a tear—but a tear of holy rapture—glistened in her half-averted eye.

Before this picture the child (*il piccolo Inglese*, as the monks called him), used to remain immovable. His delight was to watch the streaks of colour thrown on the figure by the sun as it shone through the painted glass. His favourite hour for marking this effect was towards sunset, when the last rays fell upon the picture through the western window. He used to know the exact moment when the red light from St. Paul's robe would fall on the Madonna's face, and then pass off slowly—slowly on to her hair, imparting to it a warm glow, which afforded him the most exquisite pleasure.

He used always to call her "Madrina Mia," and never missed his visit to her at sunset. What thoughts passed in the boy's mind during these long hours of silent contemplation? Did he wish that *he* had had a mother like his beautiful pictured "Ma-

drina?" Did he feel how different his fate might have been, had his childhood been watched by a devoted parent? Was he sensible how lone and forlorn was his position? He was not unhappy though; for the old monks were fond of him, and treated him with great kindness.

There was another picture, before which he would stand lost in meditation, and which, as he grew older, almost supplanted his "Madrina" in his affections. It was placed in the refectory, and, though undeniably a scriptural subject, was certainly a strange one to find in a convent of Franciscans. None knew how it had first come to occupy the place it now held, but it had been there for many years past, and, as it was a very fine painting, it never was removed.

The subject was "Susanna and the Elders," and the artist was supposed to be

Titian. Certainly his tints were recognisable in the beautiful flesh of the naked figure of Susanna, and the eye of the connoisseur would at once have known the hand of the great master by the peculiarity of the colouring; the wonderful effect of brilliancy and transparency produced by the mass of colour applied to the high flesh tints, the remarkable thinness of the paint on the parts in shade, giving to them that air of softness which no other painter has so well been able to render.

He had, however, forgotten the air of voluptuousness which his women usually possess in such a marked degree, and had imparted to the countenance of the "chaste Susanna" an air of ingenuousness and innocence that showed how little she suspected the lustful gaze of the Elders, who were represented looking at her out of some shrubs in

the distance. The garments she had taken off lay by her side; she was just divesting herself of her last piece of drapery, and seemed to recoil with modesty even from her own image reflected in the marble basin at her feet. She was kneeling on one knee, preparing to step into the bath, and a long lock of her golden hair had already tasted the pure water, into which she was about to follow it, while with one hand she held back a thick tress which had fallen from its place. The face was in profile—such an exquisite outline!—and such a brilliant blue eye, with such a mixed expression of pure modesty and innocent pleasure at the thought of the delights of immersion in the cooling waters, pure and bright as herself!

This picture excited much curiosity in Valerian's mind; he had never seen a living woman, and often wondered whether this

picture was a figment of the painter's brain, or whether there really were such beings in the world. He resolved to question one of the fathers upon the subject, and accordingly asked for an explanation from an old "Padre," with whom he was an especial favourite.

"My son," replied his informant, "woman is the channel through which sin first entered into the world, and women have ever since been a temptation to man to commit grievous sins in the sight of God. They prey upon the body of weak man on earth, and having destroyed that, their aim is to cause the perdition of our souls. Therefore it is that the devil" (and the friar made the sign of the cross) "so often assumes the form of a beautiful woman."

"But is a beautiful woman like the picture in the refectory, or does she resemble the Madonna in the chapel?"

"My son, the blessed Madonna was the one bright exception to the race. In order to bring our Saviour upon earth by natural means, when He took our earthly form upon him, the Father was compelled to have recourse to a woman, since by them we are given birth; but she was sanctified—is most holy—and now makes the surest intercession for our sins—Ave Maria! But all other women are to us merely an occasion of falling. Avoid them, my son; keep yourself from their impure contact by remaining amongst us in pious seclusion acceptable to God; here you will be able to serve Him without fear of contamination."

Valerian was answered, but not satisfied. His curiosity grew daily greater and greater, and at last produced a melancholy which soon brought on a severe fit of illness.

The confessor attended him, and inquired

of him earnestly the cause of his distress of mind. After some hesitation he was induced to confess his longing to see the world, his desire for liberty, the melancholy feeling of oppression which gradually invaded his mind, and the delusion which he could not combat, that the roof of his cell was pressing on his brain.

"My son, I lament that you have not been brought to a state of grace. I had fondly hoped, that your long residence among us, the devoted servants of the Divine Master, might have implanted in your heart a desire to serve Him also. With much regret shall we see a child, who might have been a child of grace—an elect of heaven—depart from these walls to enter upon the stormy scenes of life, where he will soon forget the service of his God, and become polluted and contaminated by the world's

impure contact. But, my son, if you *will* leave the only friends of your childhood, the only parents you have ever known, *we* may use no other means of retention, save those of admonition and entreaty. You become a free agent, as soon as you reach the age of eighteen; until then you must abide with us; and may God change your heart in the few weeks that yet must pass before the hour of your liberty arrives—may he cure your body, and restore your soul to a healthier state! And now, my son, lie down and repose; you are heated with this conversation; and I am called to vespers ——"

The first intimation of the possibility of obtaining his liberty, caused the anxious youth a greater emotion of delight than he had ever experienced. Free! free! at eighteen. How soon would he reach that age? He was now seventeen years, and

seven months. Therefore he would have his liberty in five months, twenty-one weeks, one hundred and forty-seven days. He began to count the hours, but fell asleep over the calculation.

His complaint was not dangerous, and only proceeded from the effect of an over-heated imagination. The thought of freedom operated as a charm upon his mind. In a few days he was able to leave his bed; and he determined to conceal his longing from the good monks, who would, he felt sure, be hurt at too great a demonstration of joy at leaving them; so he resolved to lose no opportunity of showing his gratitude while he yet had the power of so doing.

At length, the wished-for day arrived on which he attained the age of eighteen, and he gathered together his trifling possessions to remove them from his home—the only

home he had ever known. He was to enter upon the world next day—that world which his youthful imagination had peopled with pleasures, greater tenfold, because they were undefined, with men pure and holy as the monks of the convent, with women lovely as his "Madrina," chaste and voluptuous as Susanna.

That evening he received an order to attend the "Abbate" in his cell. The venerable old man was seated before a table covered with letters and papers, a very unusual circumstance; for the "frates" lived in great retirement, and held little correspondence, or communication with the exterior world.

He desired Valerian to sit down, and thus addressed him:

"My son, I do not purpose to reproach you with ingratitude for the step you are about to take. I will not even represent to

you how deeply we feel pained at your eagerness to leave us. I will not endeavour to curb that impatience which impels you to forsake these holy walls, on the very first day of your emancipation. We had hoped that it would please God to implant in your heart such a spirit of love for Him, such a desire to serve Him, in purity and holiness, that you would have desired to remain amongst us, and enjoy the blessings of peace and retirement. But since the great Dispenser of all blessings has seen fit to withhold His grace from you, we must, with regret, submit to His will, in suffering the devil to rule supreme in your soul. For, my son, this eagerness to mix in the sinful pursuits and pleasures of the world, this impatience to abandon the service of God for that of Mammon, (for know, my son, that you cannot serve both masters), these are feelings

sown in your mind by the evil one. I will not tell you—though I could do so from experience—what bitter disappointments are in store for you; how widely different is the material world from that ideal one which you have pictured in your brain: I will only pray that God's blessing, and mine may rest on your head, and protect you from the dangers into which you are wilfully hastening. Remember, my son, that the gates of this holy sanctuary are ever open to the penitent sinner, and that we shall gladly hail your return among us."

The old man paused, and wiped away a tear that had gathered in his eye; he was austere, but he had a kind heart, and really regretted Valerian's resolve.

He resumed his discourse:

"Before you depart, I must enlighten you upon the state of your temporal affairs, for

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the world upon which you are about to enter is a mercenary world, wherein nothing can be procured, but at a price. I am happy to say that you are not unprovided in this respect, and that you will therefore escape the temptations to which poverty and need expose men; and I shall also relate to you the history of your introduction amongst us.

"It is just seventeen years and nine months, since a poor woman rang at the gate of this monastery, and requested to see upon an affair of great importance. She brought with her a child still in arms, and a paper which, she said, would explain her visit, and its purport. The paper was written in the English tongue, but Father Giacomo, who has been your instructor in the language, interpreted its meaning to me. It stated that you were an orphan, your father and mother having both died immediately

after your birth; that your sole guardian was a brother of your father's, who, serving in the army, could not be burdened with such a charge. That he, therefore, sent the woman who carried you, to us, that we might receive you into our community, and watch over your childhood and adolescence. It proceeded to state that you should occasion us no expense, as your uncle was rich, and only desired to place you under our care on account of his being a single man, and ill-fitted to take charge of an infant.

"That every six months I should receive a fixed sum to be applied to meet the expenses which we might incur for you. It further gave your name as Valerian Marley, and declared you to be of English extraction.

"It was quite against our custom to receive children of so tender an age, but your case was so peculiar, and the woman so utterly

ignorant of all particulars respecting your relations, that we resolved upon making an exception in your favour, and receiving you into our community as soon as you could be rendered independent of a nurse's care. The paper contained further a sum of money: a year's payment in advance of the sum promised half-yearly. We agreed that it was wise to devote a portion of that sum to the payment of rent for a cottage close by, where the nurse should establish herself for a few years, and take charge of you.

"She consented to this, and for five years you remained under her care. Regularly, on the 1st of January, and on the 1st of July, a messenger came to our gate, and gave the porter a letter addressed to me, containing the promised amount, with the words, 'Per V. M.' I should have told you that the paper which was brought to us by the nurse, expressly

enjoined us to use our persuasions to induce you to become a member of our order; but also stipulated that, at the age of eighteen, you were to make your choice, as to whether you would do this, or enter the world. The last packet, which was left nearly six months ago, contained these words:

"'The moment approaches when Valerian must make his choice. Let this be done before the messenger returns, six months from this time. The Abbate is requested, silently to confide to him a letter; to state the result; and, if he should decide on leaving the convent, where his half-yearly income can reach him.'

"My son, you have decided. You now are acquainted with all that I know about you. I have only to say that your benefac-

tor's generosity has been so great that there remains in my hands a large sum due to you, the surplus of your allowance, after deducting the small sum we have expended for you. Here it is, my son; take it, it will be useful to you at your first entrance into a world which has made gold its idol, and wealth its first aim and happiness.

"Farewell, my son, farewell; let not the empty and deceitful glitter of a sinful world blind you to its vices, and to the wickedness of its deeds. Let not joys, which may taste sweet for a moment, but which leave but gall behind them; let not the vanities of life efface from your mind the good precepts which we have endeavoured to instil into your heart.

"When disappointment and sorrow have broken your now ardent spirit, when your eyes are opened to the vanity of earthly

enjoyment, then recall to mind the days of your childhood, and remember that there is a small and sanctified spot, where the prodigal son is warmly welcomed, and where you may find peace on earth, and an assurance of happiness in heaven !"

Valerian, deeply moved by the pathetic address of the Abbate, whom he had ever regarded with reverence and fear, fell on his knees before the venerable old man, who placed his hands silently on his head, and raised his eyes to heaven. A slight movement of his lips showed that he was addressing an inaudible prayer to heaven. He then motioned Valerian to rise, and made him a sign to retire. The youth seized the old man's hand, pressed it fervently to his lips, and silently withdrew.

Next morning, at sun-rise, he passed through the gate which had never been

opened to him before. He was in tears. The gate closed heavily behind him—for ever!

We will not follow him through his pilgrimage. Does not every one guess what must be his fate? Was he not doomed to disappointments of every kind from the moment he left his home? How few do not meet disappointments, even under what might justly be considered the brightest auspices; whose youthful dreams have not been dispelled, whose fond spells not broken? Is there so blessed a mortal, so favoured a child of fortune, that he can say: "All my anticipations have been realized; all my wishes granted; all my desires gratified; all my pleasures unmixed with sorrow. I have never known pain; I am unacquainted with

anxiety? — Is there one who can say this?

How much less then is it probable that the poor escaped prisoner would find the reality equal the ideal! Do we not rather feel that his disappointments must be complete; his hopes blighted; his expectations cruelly deceived? And how bitter is the fading of a fond day-dream; how heart-rending the feeling that there is none in the world to care for, to love, to look to in the hour of need! Can we be astonished if these trials worked on the mind of Valerian those effects which we have seen in his conversation at Llarnwair? Do not six months—much more six years—suffice to ripen the seeds of misanthropy and scepticism which his trials had implanted in his heart?

Who was there in the world to care for him? Where should he find one who would

sympathize with the morbid sufferings of a man totally unacquainted with the world and its worldlings? Who would become attached to the outcast, who had no birth, no relations, no friends to recommend him; whose education had been neglected, whose ideas had been purposely confined to the narrowest possible compass?

He went to Rome, an inspection of whose glorious treasures of art constituted his only happiness. He found here one idea more than realized, and that was, the conception he had formed as to the possible limits of the power of art. He passed his days in the gallery of the Vatican, gazing with wonderment at marvels of genius that met his view on all sides.

He became acquainted with some of the young artists of various nations, who had come to Rome to study, and he found in these

men more sympathy than he had as yet encountered.

That perpetual striving after something more than the possible—that ideal always beyond the material—found an echo in his heart. The difference between himself and his artist-friends was, that they applied it to art, he to nature; they to the creation of fictitious excellence drawn from their own brain; he, to the human beings who really people the world.

He lived on in this manner for a year or two, and then grew weary of his solitary and indolent existence. He had acquired much proficiency in the art of painting, and determined to visit other cities where he might see more pictures, and indulge his taste for the beautiful. He visited Bologna, Milan, Venice; but ever felt a void in his heart, a

want of sympathy, a feeling of loneness, which embittered his existence.

At length he determined to proceed to England; which, he had been told, was the country of his parents. He hoped there to find a different system of society. He had heard much of English hospitality, and English kindness of heart; and he dared to hope that this hospitality and kindness might be extended to him.

In England he met the cruellest disappointment of all. He saw hospitality proffered, he saw kindness exercised, but why should it be proffered to him—a man without family, without connections, almost without a name?

The Englishman's object in every class is to be—select. This selectness does not, as in France arise out of a distinction drawn

between the classes. It springs from a desire innate in every man's heart to associate with his superior in rank. The proud Duchess of Westendia is honoured by the presence of a foreign prince; she will do *des bassesses* to get the Crown Prince of this, or the Grand Duke of that, to her *select* party. She again, who has played the toady to the whiskered foreigner, will play the lion in a humbler sphere, where the hostess will look upon her as she did on her Prince.

The worthy Squire is proud to entertain a nobleman of any sort, while a retired tradesman contents himself with a fat Alderman, and would lick the polish off the Lord Mayor's boots, if that would persuade the functionary in question to have them cleaned in his villa at Putney.

Poor Valerian held no position, it was,

therefore, no one's *interest* to be kind to him; they could gain no possible advantage from it—and how often is this the motive for what would appear to arise from consideration, or disenterested generosity!

Yet our hero could not resign himself to his fate. He must seek fellowship somewhere, and he bethought him of joining an English regiment. The sum which he continued to receive every six months greatly exceeded his wants; and he determined to lay by a portion of it until he should have saved sufficient to purchase a commission in the army. At the end of a year he was able to do this, and thus he became an officer in a line regiment then quartered in the North of England. Here again he did not find what he sought: he liked his brother-officers well enough, and they were attached to him, though they declared him to be an "odd fish," and a

"rum un," and used similar expressive phrases to convey their opinion of him. He could not find pleasure in their pleasures; he could not discover the amusement of wearing a shooting coat infinitely too small, and lounging about the barrack yard all day, discussing the relative merits of the "Maulem Slasher," and the "Tapum Pet."

But he found in his companions sufficient friendliness and sociality to make him enjoy the time during which he was thrown on his own resources. He resumed his application to the art of painting, and discovered that he had a peculiar talent for likenesses.

This delighted his brother-officers, who all insisted on sitting to him; some for old aunts, to whom they had long promised their picture; but, "sitting to one of those infernal artists was such a dam baw;" and others hinting that it was for a "sweet creetshaw, who was

always plaguing him for his likeness, and sending him locks of her hair."

Marley was most good-natured and accommodating, and his talents gained him a certain respect and admiration; for genius always does assert its authority, even over those who least comprehend and appreciate it. In the course of the following year the regiment was moved to F——, near Llanwair; and a few months after their arrival there, Mr. Jones's invitation was received and accepted.

CHAPTER IV.

"No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.

Responds—as if, with unseen wings,
A breath from heav'n had touch'd its strings,
And whispers in its song:
'Where hast thou stayed so long?' "

LONGFELLOW. *Endymion.*

THE day following that of Valerian's arrival at Llanwair was a Sunday. All the party prepared to go to church, and the

carriages were put into requisition for the purpose of conveying the guests thither.

There was much shuffling and simpering as to who should go with whom; but at length all seemed settled, and one place only remained vacant.

"Captain Marley must go with Mrs. Morgan and Miss Tyrell in the britschka," said the hostess.

Lord Charles stepped forward and said, "Do you not know, my dear Madam, that Marley is a Catholic, and will not accompany us?"

"A *Roman* Catholic, if you please, Lord Charles," replied she with indignation. "Indeed I was not aware of it. But we may drive off, and he must remain alone."

Poor Marley was not much of a Catholic, Roman or otherwise. His bitter experience had effaced from his mind the good maxims

of his early guardians, and his intellect showed him how empty and vain was the ceremonious ritual of the church to which he nominally belonged. Religion, indeed, in any form, found but a very small place in his heart. He had little to be thankful for: his childhood had been unhappy, from restlessness, and from the want of fellowship with his equals, either in age or intellect. His manhood had proved still more galling than his childhood: he had not ceased to drink one bitter draught—that of worldly experience.

He had found in the world nothing to realise the idea which he had been taught to form of Divine Grace, and the watching of a Heavenly Father; and he had fallen into a state of utter apathy on the subject, which was fast merging into unbelief.

He worshipped the only one thing of

which he could say that "it was good"—Art. He believed in the superior powers of one human mind over another, and he had not yet denied a creative power that formed the master-mind; but he held that the mind, once formed, was left to its own guidance, and was responsible only to itself. It were useless to say that he had no opinions on religious subjects: minds such as his *do* consider the subject far more than others believe, or than they themselves are willing to allow; but the more he reflected, the more he doubted; the more he observed, the more he argued effects conforming to his views, from causes which they had not produced. He was fast approaching a state of Deism and Rationalism; his opinions were lapsing no less silently towards socialism and misanthropy. A helping hand to guide him into the right path, a pure mind that should

convince him of his error—these could alone save him from destruction.

The helping hand did not fail him!—the pure mind was near!

Days passed agreeably and rapidly within the cheerful halls of Llarnwair. Excursions were continually planned to visit the beauties with which the neighbourhood abounded. On these occasions, Lord Charles and his friend always joined the party; the former enlivening the company with his cheerful and pleasant talk; the other devoting himself almost exclusively to one whom he greatly preferred to any of the party, and that one was Edith. He had been attracted by her artlessness and good-natured manners; in conversations which he loved to hold with

her, he found a mind vastly differing from any he had met in his short career.

He had mixed little in the society of women, not that he obeyed the injunctions, or heeded the anathemas of his former tutors upon the sex; but in his wandering life, he had met with few opportunities of becoming intimately acquainted with women of a higher order than such as he met in the (not very select) society of the artists in Italy. These women he had ever regarded with some degree of aversion, partly from early prejudice, and partly from the cause which embittered everything to him—disappointment. He had looked on women as on beings of a higher order, ministering angels to console and heal the wounds of the spirit. This opinion he had ever entertained in spite of the bigoted views of his preceptors, who taught him, as we have seen, that

women are an impure race, who brought sin into the world, and endeavour to perpetuate its reign.

How different was the reality—such as it presented itself to his eyes! and so, with his natural impetuosity, he jumped to the conclusion that all women are equally heartless, equally selfish, equally vain with those who had crossed his path.

When he began to mix a little in a better class of society, he rather avoided the ladies, judging them hollow and frivolous, because he heard them converse earnestly upon the achievements of the milliner, pretend to accomplishments which they did not possess, or put on an air of mental superiority which offended him more than any other defect. To the man of genius there is nothing so repulsive as the assumption of a power which does not exist, except the affectation

which is its inevitable result. But in Edith he could find none of these failings. She certainly was not clever or accomplished, but she never affected cleverness or accomplishment. She was not strictly beautiful, but she used no art of dress to make her so. No pinched waist, no "crinolines," no tight shoe, and, above all, no talking about dress.

He found in her mind a store of sound information, never affectedly or ostentatiously displayed; he envied her the spirit of contentment which made her so cheerful and so easily satisfied; and yet he knew that she had suffered sorrows; he had heard the sad tale of her disastrous birth-night; and he wondered how she strove so bravely against trials which he felt unable to resist.

Edith was unquestionably captivated with Valerian. His interesting peculiarities, the

strange history of his infancy, his talents, and elevated, though misdirected mind, created in her a feeling of pleasure in his presence, of delight in his conversation, which she had not experienced towards any other man. She saw much in him to deplore, she was shocked at some of his sceptical opinions, which he sometimes vented even in her presence, but she had enough perception to discover that he was not to be blamed for them. He awakened in her feelings which she imagined to be those of interest and pity. But,

"Pity is akin to love,"

and pity on the part of a young girl towards a handsome officer a few years her senior, gifted with a commanding mind, and surrounded by a romantic interest, is so near "akin to love," that the boundary line waxes

fainter and fainter, until at last it is hard to tell where pity ends and love begins.

Their conversation frequently assumed a higher tone than that which commonly passes between young people. He derived sincere pleasure from hearing her simple and unsophisticated opinions upon matters which had perplexed his naturally inquiring mind; she experienced pleasure from the feeling that her plain-spoken words did produce an effect upon him, that her representations sometimes carried the day over his sceptical ideas; in fact she was a new being to him, as he was to her. Each looked on the other with curiosity, and loved to trace the workings of a mind so diversely constituted, so differently tuned. Neither guessed the real nature of the feelings entertained for the other. Valerian was—as Lord Charles called him—a woman-hater, and Edith had always declared that she was

far too necessary to her aunt and uncle's happiness, ever to marry. Yet their intimacy grew apace, and each found a daily increasing pleasure in the other's society.

It was most interesting to hear their friendly arguments on certain points, and to watch the struggle of the logical rationalist, against the pure spirit of conviction in the soundness of its own belief.

Let us lend the ear of the listener to their animated conversation, as Edith sits sketching on the terrace, and Valerian, who has been giving her a few instructions, leans over the rail of the bench on which she is seated. The pencil is idle, the sketcher's mind has wandered far from the scene before her, and she is engaged in the heat of argument, while her opponent, divided between the charms of her own expressive face and the topic

under discussion, is half persuaded and half amused by her earnestness. The subject is one of frequent recurrence—religion.

"How can you—you of all others, who profess such a bad opinion of your fellow-men—how can you believe in the infallibility of any mortal, who must be as frail, as prone to sin as yourself? How can you suffer the dominion of man in spiritual affairs? How can you blindly subject yourself to his guidance, and believe that, according to his will, you can be absolved or condemned in the world to come?"

"To speak truth, Miss Tyrell, I do not suffer men to exert much influence over me. I agree with you that our priests are but men, and I do not believe them to be a whit better than other men. Far from this; I feel sure there is much of hypocrisy concealed under the priest's cowl; that there is much

insidiousness, much secret influence exerted under false pretences. My religion could not indeed find a worse advocate than myself. I think every man ought to be allowed to serve the Being whom he worships, in the manner he considers best."

"What! banish all forms of religion; all the ministering of pious and good men!"

"I hold priestcraft in abhorrence. No, not exactly so, but I cannot suffer the tyrannical doctrines which they would impose upon me as laws—laws of their own framing, for I cannot believe that the Being whom they serve could have empowered them to exert such supreme power over their fellow-men. I cannot think that a God of mercy (for such do they represent him) ever gave forth such stern and merciless judgments."

Edith was rather astounded at words

which she had never heard from mortal lips before. To serve the Lord in an erroneous manner appeared to her a great sin; but to renounce his ministers thus, was an outrage that had never entered her mind. But she did not in her indignation forget the causes which had produced these effects on Valerian, and accordingly she did not condemn, but rather compassionated one who knew not the consolation and the blessing of faith in a Supreme and loving Father. She was no theologian, but again the eloquence of conviction came to her assistance.

"To whom then do you ascribe the blessings you enjoy?"

"What blessings *do* I enjoy? Have I enjoyed the blessing of childhood? Have I enjoyed the blessings of manhood? Have I enjoyed the blessings of home, of parental affection, of friendship,—of love?"

"You have not been blessed so much as many whom you see around you, but you forget the blessings you do possess, and which, because they are equally bestowed on all, are apt to lose their real value in the sight of some. By whose grace do you enjoy the blessings of health, the gift of intellect, the pleasures of your favourite pursuits, the delights of the sun, the air, the country, who—if not a great creative power—has given you even life?"

"That can hardly be called a blessing, dear Miss Tyrell. Would that I had not been born! But I have faith in a creative power, I do believe in the formation of the beautiful by an omnipotent hand; I believe in a Supreme Being; but the Being whom I have worshipped differs widely from the Being I am instructed to serve. To Him, the hypo-

crisy that is carried on in his name can be but offensive; to Him there is no delight in the fall of his creatures; He rules with a palm of mercy, not with a sword of vengeance."

"And such a God would you find ruling over our Church;" interposed Edith, who thought the moment a favourable one: "one, as you have said, of mercy and of justice,—but above all, of mercy. If you would suffer yourself to be instructed by a member of our religion, more competent than myself to convince you of its blessed truths, you would, I am sure, derive comfort and consolation from his advice and instructions. You have not found these in the Church whose religion you profess; why not therefore seek whether they can be derived from another system?"

"When first I joined my regiment," said

Marley, "I frequently attended the service in the chapel. I confess I saw nothing there that could induce me to renounce my creed for such an one as was there offered to me. The service was gabbled in an almost incomprehensible manner; some children sang parodies on psalms, in shrill voices completely out of tune; and then a young man mounted the pulpit, and gave forth, in an authoritative tone, his precepts and his admonitions, to heads far wiser and far older than his own. What were my impressions therefore? I had witnessed in the Protestant Church at once, indecorum, negligence, and presumption."

"You happened to see an unfortunate specimen of a Protestant Church; but I doubt very much whether in small towns on the continent, you would not find your service equally ill-performed."

"Pardon me, I should not. The service may, perhaps, not be in itself better, but the spirit in which it is done is different. It may be performed even *badly*, but it never is performed *negligently*. This I must say for the lay members of our Church; they *do* use their best endeavours to make their service as acceptable to the Divinity whom they worship as they possibly can. The women work for the Church, hoping that the offering of their toil may be acceptable to God. They pray, not on fixed days, nor at stated hours, but at any moment, in the sanctuary. The *curé* of the village may be ignorant and unenlightened, but at least he is earnest and sincere. He makes an hourly sacrifice to his God; he devotes himself mentally and bodily to the service he has entered; he forswears the pleasures of home,

of family, of the domestic fireside; to live alone, and give himself up entirely to his one pursuit.

"How is it in *your* Church? Livings are in the gift of men of property; they fix on one of their children to hold it; he passes a wild career at an university, learns a certain amount of Latin and Greek, and is thereby qualified to be a minister of God, that he may enjoy a good parsonage-house, a good salary, in fact, means to marry and make himself comfortable. Why should I believe in him? Why should I trust my spiritual guidance to him, whom I myself, ignorant as I am on the subject, could instruct in the principles of the trade which he follows, for I say it is a *trade*, and deserves no better name."

Edith felt puzzled. She could not but see that there was some truth in what Marley

advanced. But she felt an inward conviction that she was right, and she calmly replied:

"You condemn the wine because the glass has a flaw. I do not feel able, and I am not willing, to enter with you into arguments which I am not learned enough to sustain. But believe me, Captain Marley, you will never be happy so long as you remain in your present state of doubt, almost of incredulity. You have passed many years among the professors of your own religion. You have entered the world and found disappointment there. You have yet one resource left. If you do not avail yourself of it, you remain wilfully in a condition of unhappiness."

She said this with a sorrowful air; and the tone of her voice proved that she regretted to find him inflexible on the one great point that

affected his welfare and happiness. She rose and gathered her drawing materials with the intention of going into the house. He advanced towards her, and seized her hand:

"Forgive me, dear Miss Tyrell, if I have offended you. In the heat of discussion, I may have expressed myself in a manner which may have caused you annoyance. Believe me, if such be the case, I regret it most sincerely. I have never experienced such delight as in conversing thus with you. It is so rare, so very rare, for an outcast to find one who will show sufficient interest in him, to take the trouble of pointing out to him the path to happiness. Do not think that your kind words have no influence on me. My sceptical and hardened heart may prompt me at the moment to combat the arguments you use, but these have their

effect notwithstanding. I may endeavour to argue away certain tenets not agreeable to my mind; but reflection places the matter in a very different light. I reflect that they are those that *you* hold, and my greatest happiness were, to be—as you are. Say therefore, that you pardon me; that you pity, but do not condemn my obstinacy. Say this, that I may ever feel that I parted in peace from the first human being that ever showed interest in me; from the first woman I ever sincerely esteemed, and—respected!"

"Why do you say, part?"

"My leave expires to-morrow, and I must then, alas! return to my duties, and live on the recollection of Llarnwair, and the happy days I have passed within its hospitable walls."

Why did the pencil drop from Edith's hold? Why did she hastily raise her hand

to her face while he stooped to pick it up? Why that faltering tone of voice as she replied:

"I have nothing to forgive; do *you* not forget."

She walked hurriedly towards the house; while Valerian remained fixed in the same spot; and watched her with a gaze of mingled sorrow and admiration, until the massive door concealed her from his view.

CHAPTER V.

"L'amour, partout où il est, est toujours le maître. Il forme l'âme, le corps, et l'esprit selon ce qu'il est. Il n'est ni petit, ni grand, selon le cœur et l'esprit qu'il occupe, mais selon ce qu'il est en lui-même ; et il semble véritablement que l'amour est à l'âme de celui qui aime, ce que l'âme est au corps qu'elle anime.

"Il est difficile de définir l'amour. Ce que l'on en peut dire, est, que dans l'âme c'est une passion de régner ; dans les esprits c'est une sympathie ; et dans le corps ce n'est qu'une envie cachée, et délicate de posséder ce que l'on aime, après beaucoup de mystères.

"La plus juste comparaison qu'on puisse faire de

l'amour, est celle de la fièvre. Nous n'avons non plus de pouvoir sur l'un, que sur l'autre ; soit pour la violence, soit pour la durée."—DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULT. *Maximes Morales.*

THE next day arrived, and with it the hour for Valerian's departure. The previous evening had passed much as usual, except to two of the party, over whom a gloom was certainly cast. Edith, on being asked to sing one of the touching ballads which she rendered with so much sweetness and expression, made an effort to comply, but there was something in her throat that seemed to choke the utterance of the notes, and she pleaded cold, and gave it up in despair. One of the whist-players having left that morning, Valerian was called on to "cut in;" he proved but a sorry partner to an old sister of Mr. Jones', who blew him up sky-high for

not "finessing his knave," returning her lead, "ruffing the clubs," &c. &c.

Alas for the days of romance! Then was the parting of two lovers a very different affair to what it is now. Then should we have learnt how the noble and brave Hildebrand, clad in corslet of mail, mounted his proud steed, gave him the spur which he had so nobly won in defending his King and his country, and went to serve his King and his faith in the Holy Land. The beauteous Lady Hildegarde would have stood on the steps, surrounded by her handmaidens, and wrung her hands in despair at the departure of her lover. But in these matter-of-fact days, the heroine finds no more romantic way of departure than taking her first-class ticket; and the brave knight goes off and vanishes from his mistress's sight, in a

superannuated post-chaise, or in a one-horse fly!

But are the feelings less susceptible, because they are less shown? Did not Valerian regret the necessity of his departure as much as the proud Hildebrand? Did not Edith's sorrow equal that of the noble Hildegarde? Yet, on reflection, perhaps it was not so. Neither Valerian nor Edith knew how deeply the feeling of affection had taken root in their hearts. It was not until each was left alone, that both discovered how necessary the one was to the other.

Marley and his friend have bidden farewell to Llarnwair, and are far on their way to F ——. Edith sits on the terrace, and purposes finishing the sketch which she had commenced yesterday. But she soon discovers that she is not "i' the vein," and sinks into deep meditation. The book which

had rested on her knee slips off on to the ground. She stoops to pick it up, but the fall has turned over some of its leaves, and she is astonished to find some lines written in a hand she could not recognize. They ran thus:

"A sense of that which is true, that which is good, and that which is beautiful, ennobles the soul and purifies the heart; but what is this, even this sentiment, unless there be at hand a sympathetic soul, with whom it may be shared?

"Never was I so fully convinced of the truth of this reflection as at this sad moment, which parts me from you.

"V. M."*

* These words were written by Wilhelm von Humboldt, in the album of the lady to whom he afterwards addressed his beautiful "Briefe an eine

She needed not to read the initials, though she now saw Marley's writing for the first time. A tear fell on the open page before her. She felt that he loved her.

She endeavoured to analyse her own sentiments towards him. Love was a passion so new to her, that she knew not whether that was her feeling. She had not read the mass of high-flown trash, which some girls of her years devour with so much avidity, and therefore she knew not, by anticipation, the nature of the wound which Cupid's arrow inflicts. Ah Edith, it is a deep-barbed shaft, shot by no awkward marksman; and once in the heart, it may not be removed—save by one hand!

Hers was not, however, the mere senti-

Freundin." Valerian was a good German scholar, and he had probably borne the beautiful sentiment in his memory.

mentalism of novel heroines. She did not love him because he was handsome, nor because he was romantic; she loved him because she felt that she had a duty to perform, because she had seen his proud spirit bend under her feeble but pure sway; she saw a man misguided, unhappy, and hastening to destruction, and she felt that it was in her power to save him. She saw in him the serpent, in herself the charmer, whose dictates he must obey.

How vapid now appeared to her the light conversation to which she was compelled to listen, and in which she needs must join! How gladly would she have escaped from the sound of the cheerful voices that fell on her ear as she re-entered the drawing-room! But she was, above all, a girl of sense—not a strong-minded woman, Heaven forefend, but of good common sense and amiable disposition.

She felt that during her stay with her kind hosts, it were wrong of her to give way selfishly to her feelings, so she made the exertion, and succeeded, though she was heavy at heart; and the pretty white bed on which she rested at night, could have told many a tale of sleepless hours, and of burning tears.

Meanwhile how fared Valerian?

Let us indiscreetly peep into his little barrack-room, where we shall find him seated listlessly by the fire, reading, or pretending to read, a newspaper, which—probably for the sake of variety—he has turned upside down.

Beside him lies a Scotch terrier of marvellously small dimensions. This pert-looking little fellow was Marley's favourite companion. He had always declared that he

loved little "Fly" better than any creature upon earth.

This might have been true before he went to Llarnwair; but was it so now? I trow not. Some image now hovers before his eyes, and prevents his discovering the inverted position of his newspaper.

He was in what his friend Charles Winslow termed "one of his dolorous moods." He had long been subject to fits of low spirits; and sometimes they came over him with such intensity, that his comrades actually feared to leave him alone. What was the cause of the present attack? Why had the fit never left him since his return from Llarnwair?

The answer is a short one. He was in love!

Ay, in love; and far deeper in love than even he imagined. The feeling was as new

to him as to Edith, but in him it took another form. He had always believed that he never should be in love with any woman. He had entertained a bad opinion of the sex; and, moreover, he possessed one sole blessing upon earth—liberty; and that he must resign if he married. Then again, he always argued, and rightly—who would marry him? He had no means to marry, and, besides, who would become allied to one without a name, without position, without even parents to own him?

The mystery which hung over his parentage was a source of much bitterness to him now. Hitherto he had been callous about it, saying, in his cynical way, that if his family did not choose to own him, he would force himself on no one; and that it was little worth his while to take the pains of seeking—probably in vain—a set of heartless

and unnatural relations, whom he must ever hate on account of their past conduct to him. What cared he for a name—for position? He had sufficient to live on, though the source of the income was precarious; for who knew when it might cease to be sent to him regularly: and in this case, to whom should he apply for its continuance?

All these doubts and queries agitated and perplexed him. Of one thing only was he certain—that he loved Edith. Yet how different was his love from hers! His was a love of passions long restrained; a love almost ferocious in its intensity—a love which would devour if not encouraged; and yet—strange medley!—its chief feature was humility and obedience! He could not but acknowledge her superiority over him; he felt that, great as was the power of logic,

her simple reasoning was far better. He felt that she was right, and that his proud spirit had bent, and must bend, before her purity and simplicity. He saw that he had been working his own destruction; and that his mind, left to its own guidance, would impel him thither. His eyes were opened. He perceived that he was in the wrong path. He did not see the right one—true; but he had found the clue that could lead him thither.

About a week after this, an inspection, by the General of the district, was to take place at F——. The regiment to which Valerian belonged (one of light infantry) was to manœuvre; and the officers decided upon giving a luncheon in the barracks to such of the neighbouring families as could

be induced to be present on the occasion. Among the persons invited were of course Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and the party at Llarnwair. The distance was a long one, but they were always ready to join in any gaiety; and it was agreed that they should "do themselves the pleasure of accepting the polite invitation of Sir John Martinet and the officers of the —th."

On the appointed day, they started early for F——, and with them, of course, was Edith Tyrell. The troops were already on the ground when they arrived, and the carriages drew up on the brow of a hill, from which they could obtain an excellent view of the proceedings.

The manœuvres, though certainly very pretty and well executed, did not afford much amusement to the ladies, to whom they were quite incomprehensible. The

military appeared to form themselves into squares, and then turn themselves inside out without any obvious cause; then some ran forward and fired, and then others came forward when they ran back—"for all the world," said Miss Simper, "as if they had been playing at 'Tom Tiddler's ground,' or 'threading the needle.'"

At length the inspection was over, to the great relief of Mrs. Morgan, whose arms were very tired from holding her hands to her ears, which she had done the whole time, saying, that: "the horrid noise of the shooting always gave her such a dreadful head-ache."

When all was concluded, Valerian came up to Mr. Jones's carriage. He bowed civilly to her, and responded warmly to Mr. Jones's hearty shake of the hand, while to Edith he directed a glance that spoke volumes.

They proceeded to the barracks, where a sumptuous luncheon was prepared. Marley sat between Edith and Mrs. Jones, but nothing save the most ordinary formalities passed between them; they felt that it were profanation of their love to let any sign of it appear before so many witnesses.

Mrs. Morgan, one of those people who seem fated to speak *mal à propos*, said across the table:

"Captain Marley, we have all heard so much of your painting, that we are perfectly dying to see some of your productions: you really must show us one or two specimens."

"Oil-pictures are unwieldy," replied Valerian, "I fear I could not bring any one down here."

"O, but we will go up into your room and see them there. That will be twice

as pleasant; I have never seen a barrack-room, and I am so curious to see yours."

"O! do Captain Marley, it will be so new and nice;" said a tall young lady in plaits.

"It must be so funny," added Miss Simper.

This proposition evidently annoyed Marley, but the more he tried to excuse himself, the more he was pressed. What should he do? There was something there they must not see.

"I will go and prepare my room for your visit," said he at last in despair, "I will put out some pictures, and place them in a good light."

The party now all rose from table, and Valerian left the room to prepare his own. The ladies gathered in a knot, and Mrs. Morgan thus addressed them:

"Now, my dear creatures, I've got an idea. I'm sure Captain Marley's gone to hide some picture, or put away something he does not want us to see. I propose that we follow him noiselessly, and catch him in the act.—What say you?"

"O! what a capital idea," said the plaited young lady.

"So much originalism!" added the 'Hero-worshipper.'

"It will be very funny!" lisped Miss Simper, in whose mind this idea appeared to reign predominant.

So they all hurried off, and scampered across the barrack-yard to follow poor Marley.

Edith alone remained; she felt that her companions showed little good taste in acting thus, and she determined not to follow their example.

Valerian walked slowly up the stairs, and entered his room, and closed the door, little suspecting how near were his inopportune visitors.

"Now my dears, follow me," said the ring-leader of the party. "Hush! silence! no noise, or he'll hear us."

They ascended the stairs on tip-toe; and made a sudden rush on Valerian's door, exclaiming triumphantly:

"Here we are!"

He of course pretended to be much amused and delighted; but in his heart he was vexed and annoyed beyond measure. They dispersed like flies about the room. Every corner and nook were visited with curiosity. His Turkish pipes, and cigar-cases were examined, and Miss Simper actually put a paper cigarette in her mouth, and declared it must be "so funny" to smoke.

"O, how very pretty!" exclaimed Mrs. Morgan, who had stopped before a large easel on which was placed a large unfinished picture of Beatrice Cenci, which he was then painting from recollection. "How very good, how beautifully done! Dear, dear, it's so like somebody; and I can't think who it is!"

Two or three young ladies rushed towards her to see the picture which had caused this exclamation. With one voice they all cried:

"It's Edith!"

"It's Miss Tyrell!"

Edith entered the room just in time to hear her name echoed from mouth to mouth. She also looked at the picture, and saw at once the cause. She cast at Valerian one glance of soft reproach and forgiveness.

* * * *

Each succeeding day found Edith more depressed and more restless. She now loved only to take long walks alone in the beautiful woods that surrounded Llarnwair. She would absent herself for hours under pretence of sketching; which intention she may certainly have had at starting, but the new sketch-book (the old one had been carefully locked up), did not afford any proof of her industry, and was as yet totally innocent of the pencil's pressure.

CHAPTER VI.

Faust. Er liebt dich
Verstehst du was das heißt? Er liebt dich!
Margarete.—Mich überläuft's!
Faust.—O schaudre nicht! Laß diesen Blick,
Laß diesen Händedruck dir sagen,
Was unaussprechlich ist:
Sich hinzugeben ganz, und eine Wonne
Zu fühlen, die ewig seyn muß!
Ewig!—Ihr Ende würde Verzweiflung sein.
Nein, kein Ende! kein Ende!

Göthe.

Margarete.—Versprich mir, Heinrich!
Faust. Was ich kann!

Margarete.—Nun sag', wie hast du's mit der Religion?

* * *

Faust.—Laß das, mein Kind! Du fühlst, ich bin dir gut;
Für meine Lieben ließ ich Leib und Blut.

Göthe.

Our heroine's visit to Llarnwair extended far beyond the period originally proposed. The burning heat of August had passed away, and September with its shortened, but balmy days, still found her the guest of her hospitable friends.

Mrs. Jones had pressed her to prolong her stay, and she had willingly availed herself of her offer: for she knew that the parching heat of our English summer would be almost unbearable in the midst of the smoky city to which she must return on leaving her present abode. Was this her sole

reason? or did she feel a pleasure in knowing that she was near to Valerian?

He had not declared his affection for her: she was half unwilling to confess to herself how much she loved him; yet she lingered on near to the place where he was, and delighted to ramble among scenes that recalled to her memory the happy walks that they had taken together, the pleasant fleeting hours of sweet converse they had there enjoyed.

Let us follow her in one of her solitary rambles through the magnificent wood that formed the background of the house. See her starting in her plain, neat dress, of dark-coloured silk, and her simple straw bonnet. Under her arm, she carries as usual, the virgin sketch-book. Useless burden!

She wends her way up the mountain, turning now and then to cast a downward

glance at the beautiful scene expanding before her view. Slowly she climbs the steep ascent, until she reaches a lonely spot, where the trees seemed to have left an oasis, overshadowed by their thick foliage. She spread a shawl which she carried on her arm, upon the grass, and seating herself, prepared to draw the beautiful landscape before her.

It was in truth a subject worthy of a Claude. At her feet stood the massive pile that formed the Jones's family seat, a huge ponderous mass, which seemed as though it must weigh heavily on the earth that would appear to have sunk with its weight. Beyond, the rich park scenery, its brilliant green chequered here and there with an early autumn tint; and, further still, the calm, brilliant expanse of the sea, resembling a huge mirror framed in cragged rocks.

Edith was almost awed by the immensity

of the scene that lay unrolled at her feet; it seemed impossible that so many beauties should be condensed into one small sheet; but she determined to venture on the attempt; for many questions had been asked her concerning her recent sketches, to which she had felt sorely puzzled to reply.

"Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute," and soon she became absorbed in her task.

Suddenly, the noise of a rustling among the leaves roused her from her abstraction. The sound of a horse's tread next met her ear. It was evidently approaching the spot where she was seated, for it grew louder every instant. In another minute a tall figure appeared through the trees, sprang from his horse, threw the bridle on his neck, and was at her feet. It was Valerian!

"Miss Tyrell—Edith—hear me! I can

restrain no longer words which rack my bosom while I give them not utterance. Edith, I love you! Nay, do not reply: do not by one hasty word, doom me to the wretchedness which I shall never cease to feel if you deny my prayer. Have pity on me; if you do not love, at least compassionate me! Do not contemn the offer of a first love, of new born affection. I have never loved woman, save you. These words have never crossed my lips before. This heart has never thus been moved. I have sneered at love. I have condemned and despised woman. But you, Edith, have shown me my error. You have proved to me that without a ministering angel, such as you to guide him, man is a lone—a miserable being! Let me then hope. I dare not think that you return my devoted, unchangeable affection; but do not, by one word, destroy the only gleam of

happiness that has shone on my unhappy path; do not break the only chain that binds me to life; the hope that one bright day, the first one in my life, may yet dawn on me; the blessed day when I may call you mine!"

He knelt at her feet, and seemed to have spoken on to prevent her from uttering a word that might destroy his bright visions. When he ceased, the solemn stillness around fell heavily on his ear; he bowed his head, and dared not raise his eyes to hers. The haughty spirit was rebuked before the simple maiden, and awaited her reply, as a culprit looks for the solemn sentence of his judge.

She was much moved, and for a moment could not utter a word.

"Valerian," said she, after a pause, "I was not prepared for this; I scarcely know how to reply. Allow me time to consider before

I give an answer to so momentous a question."

"No, Edith! above all, for Heaven's sake, no delay. Seal my fate at once. Doom me to misery, or make me for ever the happiest of men. Say, do you love me? No, no, not that. May I hope that you will *ever* love me? O! no suspense, I pray you; I can bear anything but that."

"Valerian, I feel for you what I have never felt for man before. I am happy when you are near me; I am lonely and restless when you are away. Is this love?"

"It is—it is!" and his face wore a beaming expression of joy which she had never seen before. His eye met hers with a look of triumph that spoke plainly the thrill of delight her words had shot into his heart.

"If this be love then, Valerian, I love you. Why should I deny it? It is a pure and

holy feeling, of which I am not ashamed. But, Valerian, think how many obstacles lie in our way. Let us reason calmly upon the subject, and see how they can be met."

"Before the torrent of love all worldly obstacles must yield. If you love me, our united strength shall overturn all impediments, shall break down all the feeble barriers, which prejudice can raise to hinder the completion of happiness!"

"You must be calm, Valerian; let not passion blind you. Since you will obey me, my first injunction shall be that you learn to meet difficulties with manly courage, with firmness of spirit. Our duty, Valerian, should be first considered, our inclination afterwards. Happiness can only be secured when these two can be combined."

"O Edith, you reason coldly. I see you do not love me. Tell me so. I can bear it

—but do not oppose such arguments to the passion that consumes me! Edith, you love another!"

She rose, and motioned as though to leave him.

"One thing I hold to beyond all. I will not be doubted. I have said, and I now repeat it, that I never loved until I saw you."

He grasped her hand in agitation.

"Pardon me—pardon me, I am mad! I know not what I say. Doubt you, Edith! It is because I do *not* doubt you, it is because of your pure sincerity, which I have never met in woman before—it is for this that I love, that I adore you!"

She resumed her seat. Marley sat at her feet, resting his head upon his hand, and gazed upon her with intense admiration.

He resumed, in a calmer tone:

"Edith, I feel sure that the great Power destined us one for the other! I am convinced that we should, in joining our hands, obey the dictates of the Supreme will. From the moment of our birth, it was decreed that we should meet, that we should be united. See how the hand of fate has brought me from a distant land to this secluded place. Mark how I was freed from the bonds that were so nearly binding me fast for ever; see how my wanderings have guided me hither. Mark the similarity of the circumstances attending our birth. Both deprived of the blessing of parents, both were the cause of the death of their mother. For I have heard, Edith, that my mother died as did yours. I am now convinced that man requires a woman's heart to assure his happiness. During his youth and childhood, a mother watches over and protects him; she guides

his early footsteps into the path of happiness. Then a tender and pure spirit comes forth and blesses his manhood with true love and fostering care. The first of these affections I have never known; the second is within my grasp. Can you—will you—deny it?"

Edith was almost moved to tears by his appeal. His voice was so persuasive, so melancholy in its tone; he seemed to feel so deeply the sentiments which he uttered, he had painted so graphically his lone condition, that she felt unable to resist his prayer, and earnestly replied:

"No, Valerian, I will *not* deny you. I feel in my heart that I shall never be happy unless I am yours. But, indeed, I am not my own mistress. I can do nothing—can promise nothing, without the consent of those kind protectors to whom I have devoted all

the love I could have felt for my parents, for such have they been to me. I shall return home very soon, I will then consult them, and use every argument to induce them to give their consent. The answer is in their hands. But, I must frankly own, dear Valerian, I foresee many difficulties that will arise to the fulfilment of our hopes. First, our difference of faith."

"I have *no* faith," he hastily interrupted. "I see now plainly my own infidelity, my wicked unbelief. Faith is what I want. I have none—save in you, my loved Edith."

"But the difference of our creed?"

"I have no creed—none; but I earnestly desire one. Convince me—convince me, Edith, my spirit is in your hand, lead it where you will. I trust me to your guidance. But no faith can enter my heart, no belief arise while I am in this fever of excitement—

this agony of doubt. No, Edith—conviction must creep gradually over me; must assert its reign by the domestic fire-side; must be taught during long days, long evenings that we shall pass in sweet converse. Fear not, Edith, you have the rein of my spirit, guide it where you list! Dearest, you have a mission! A mission to save me from destruction, to which, ere I knew you, I was fast hastening; do not shrink from it, but fulfil it nobly. It is a sacrifice: I know it well. You are wedding one whose origin you do not know; whose name and parents are a mystery. O, heartless, cruel wretches, who could doom their offspring to such disappointments, to such misery as has been mine!"

"Valerian," said Edith, "I love you not the less. I love you for yourself—not for your birth, nor your possessions. The one

is uncertain—true—but are you the less dear to me? The others are few, I presume, but is that your fault?"

"Angel!" exclaimed Valerian, seizing Edith's hand, and pressing it with fervour to his lips, "these words are engraven in letters of gold upon my heart. The recollection of them shall be my happiness until—until the day when a far greater felicity awaits me. For, Edith, you will be mine; I know—I feel you will be mine. Give me but one promise, and I will start for Italy tomorrow; there I will seek and not desist until I find the clue to my parentage. I will go to the monastery, and implore the monks upon my knees to help me in my search. Edith—one word more—one promise more—and I am happy—and I am content!"

"One moment," said Edith: "think me not cold; think me not worldly; you would

judge me harshly and wrongfully. But let us look with steadfastness upon our probable fate if we should marry. Valerian, can we afford to marry? Dear Valerian, I have seen a case in which rashness, and a blind recklessness to obey love's impulse, caused a marriage that both have since bitterly rued! Love cannot bear up against hourly privation, against daily want. Does this fate await us, Valerian?"

He looked confused.

"My means are very small, and very uncertain. But if I find my parents, perhaps they may be increased."

"As to mine," said Edith, "I am quite ignorant upon that point. I have always lived with my uncle and aunt, and have never thought of any possessions of my own."

"Doubt not—doubt not, dearest, all will

yet be well. O! for a blessing on the day that first brought together two hearts so formed for each other as ours. But doubly blessed be the day, and I trust it may not be distant—on which they shall form but one!"

"I must return home now," said Edith; "see, the sun is setting, and they will wonder at my long absence."

"One instant more! Hear me, Edith, while I swear by that setting sun, that I have never loved—that I do not love—that I never will love any earthly being save you! That his rays shall never shine on any happiness of mine, unless that happiness be shared with you. That my labours shall not cease until I have discovered the secret of my birth, and that I am before heaven your wedded husband from this day — for ever!"

"Valerian," replied she, impressively, "my word is as good as my oath. Receive it, therefore, and believe that I shall leave nothing undone that can make me yours in the sight of Heaven and before men; that I love you sincerely, deeply, and that I live in the fond hope of becoming your wedded wife. And now farewell, farewell!"

"A seal, a seal upon this promise; a sacred seal of pure and devoted love!"

He extended his arms towards Edith; she resisted not, but sank trembling upon his breast.

O blissful moment! Who has forgotten the rapture that comes but *once*; when love —*first* and requited love—bursts on the brain, and giddies it in its ecstatic whirl!

* * * * *

When Edith returned home it was almost dark. She went at once to her room,

that she might escape all questions concerning the unfortunate sketch, which certainly did not show evidences of so many hours' work.

A letter was placed in her hand by the servant as she crossed the hall. She carried it up stairs without looking at the writing. Her thoughts were all engrossed on one object; and the interest which the receipt of a letter from home always occasioned her, faded before the new feelings awakened in her heart.

She broke the seal listlessly. The letter was a short one. She read it with feelings of profound emotion.

"79, Castle Street, Leicester Square,
"London, October, 1845.

"Dear Edith,

"I implore you to come here without one

moment's delay; your aunt is very dangerously ill, and a calamity has befallen me which I dare not confide to her. Therefore, dearest Edith, come here at once to your unhappy uncle.

"H. St. Meurice."

Edith lost no time in preparing to obey her uncle's recal. This mysterious letter caused her the greatest distress. She must start next day without fail. What could be the cause of her uncle being in London? And how to let Valerian know of her departure? O! wretched termination to a happy day!

With many tears did she bid farewell to her kind hosts. The coach started at daybreak, and a cold, damp morning it was; but

she heeded this little in the midst of so many sorrows.

Long and tedious was her journey to London. When she reached the door of her uncle's house, her heart palpitated violently; she almost wished she were not so near the moment that must solve the problem.

Henry, hearing her knock, rushed down to meet her. The unhappy man could scarcely gasp out these words:

"Edith—thank God!—you are come. Your aunt is—dying—and—and I—am—ruined!"

CHAPTER VII.

"Quantum quisque nummorum condit in arca,
Tantum habet et fidei."

JUVENAL.

In order to comprehend the position of Henry St. Meurice at the moment of Edith's precipitate return, it will be necessary to refer to events which had occurred during the two months she had passed at Llarnwair. The course of time that had glided on so peacefully, so happily for her, had worked many

changes in others who figure in this tale; it had brought into the hearts of some, gladness; into that of others, sorrow and anxiety; into one home, sickness, ruin and despair. About the time when Edith first left her relations on her visit to the Joneses, great festivities were taking place at Bewleigh Hall. A gigantic tent had been erected on the terrace, in which were assembled several hundred persons, bidden to the feast given in honour of the majority of the heir to the estate. The day was brilliant, as July days are in England, and the scene no less so.

The appeal to the stomach had succeeded marvellously well on this occasion. The tenants and farmers had responded, with wonderful alacrity, to the invitation of Lord and Lady Bewleigh. Not that these diners were in the least degree attached to their hosts, not that Lord or Lady Bewleigh cared one

straw for their guests; the one party had thought it politic to invite, the other had found it convenient to accept. Where will not an English farmer go for a hecatomb of roast beef, and a burnt offering of plum-pudding?

"Attachment to the family" is the password of the farmer into the preference of nice bits of good soil at low rates; it is the vanity, the fond delusion of the landlord. But let any untoward event happen to "the family;" let the estate pass from the hands of the nobleman into those of the wealthy merchant who can afford to buy him out; where is then the boasted attachment? On whom is it *then* bestowed?

The weight of destruction which had long been pending over the Bewleigh family, soon broke the thread by which it was suspended, and heavy was its fall. The system of reck-

less extravagance which they were pursuing when last we saw them; the immense losses and increased ventures of Lord Bewleigh, all this could not be of long continuance; the crisis, delayed only by the excellent name which the family had hitherto enjoyed, must not the less arrive!

Three years had elapsed since the day, memorable to the neighbourhood of Bewleigh, when the authenticated rumour of an execution in the Hall was first circulated. Little had been seen of the owners lately; they had not resided at their country-seat for many years; for the September shooting parties had long been given up, and without these, the place was of course detestable. It was generally supposed that the family was abroad at the time of the crisis, and that it had remained there for a length of time. Certain it is that no part of it ever appeared

in D——shire until the summer of 1845, when Cosmo St. Meurice was close upon the age of twenty-one.

The creditors were then given to understand, that upon the attainment of the young man's majority, a settlement of Lord Bewleigh's debts would take place, Cosmo having given his consent to the creation of a large mortgage, which should relieve his father from his embarrassments, and restore to the use of the family the income which at present was in the hands of receivers. This was true. Cosmo had agreed to raise a considerable sum of money so soon as his signature should become valid. He had not in this matter obeyed any feeling of affection towards his father; there had not existed at any time between them, sentiments which would prompt him to act thus, for the estrangement which had commenced between

father and son during the childhood of the latter, had increased with years, and was fast ripening into aversion. Neither had Cosmo been impelled by any kindly sentiments towards his mother, who had really deserved them at his hands; for, though foolish, and herself extravagant, she had loved her son warmly, and had often represented to his father the wickedness of his course in destroying the boy's prospects by yielding to his gambling propensities.

Cosmo had but one motive for doing what he did; and that was—self.

He had argued within himself, that the family income being in the hands of receivers, Lord Bewleigh would be unable to make him any allowance. He could not get on without money; and, as his father was likely to live many years, he would probably pay more, when the property reverted to him, upon

sums raised for his own use during the lifetime of Lord Bewleigh, than he was now called upon to place upon the estate. He had the further advantage of having the reins in his hand, and the power of making excellent terms for himself.

So a conclave of lawyers was assembled, a compromise made with Lord Bewleigh's creditors, and a deed drawn out for signature on the day of Cosmo's majority.

Loud were the cheers that rose from the interior of the tent, as the chairman proposed "The health of Mr. St. Meurice, heir to the titles and estates of the noble house of Bewleigh! Long may he live!"

The hero of the feast appeared at this

moment upon the steps of the terrace, where he could be seen by all the cheerers, for the tent was open on the side nearest the house. Beside him stood Lord and Lady Bewleigh, and he held by the hand his little sister, now eleven years old.

He bowed coldly to the assembled party, and in a few words acknowledged the "honour they had done him." What cared he for them? he knew them to be mere time-servers, whose affection and devotion to his family fell and rose with the fulness of the family purse. But in truth, what cared he for anybody? He had secured to himself a good income, was very good-looking, and knew it—what wanted he more? What pleasure could he derive from those shouts, bought at the price of beef and beer?

Cosmo was the very impersonation of self-

ishness. He had all his father's faults—except indeed the propensity for play—without any of his father's talents and mind. He had all his mother's vanity, without her redeeming characteristic—her devoted love for her children.

He had been to Harrow and to Cambridge, and had never distinguished himself at either. His university career had ended with rustication, tantamount to expulsion. So he entered a crack regiment, and found delight in displaying his phaetons and horses, &c., to the gaze of his brother officers. All this expense had brought him into difficulty during his minority, but he stipulated that these debts were to be paid out of the money raised by himself and his father.

He was not more liked in his regiment

than he had been at school or college. He was voted designing and cunning, and his comrades always doubted his sincerity. He spared no means to attain his end, whatever that end might be; and many of his friends were sacrificed to its attainment.

Lord Bewleigh soon turned his back upon the festive scene. Strange that a father should not find pleasure in seeing his son reach such an important epoch in his existence! yet this was undoubtedly the case. The gloom which came over him on the day of Cosmo's birth, now again overshadows his brow with double intensity. How forced the smile with which he acknowledges the ovations offered to his child; how gloomy and sullen his appearance at the large dinner-party that day! He makes

many attempts to play the agreeable, but finding that, spite of his efforts, it is a dead failure, he pleads fatigue and headache, and retires early to his private room.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Les longues prospérités s'écoulent quelquefois en un moment, comme les chaleurs de l'été sont emportées par un jour d'orage."—VAUVENARGUES.

THE course devised by the lawyers for the relief of Lord Bewleigh, and the resettlement of the estates, was, that sales should be immediately effected on certain parts of the property, to such an amount as would suffice to pay off the previous mortgagees, who were receiving a heavy rate of interest for their money; so as to make the new

mortgage, effected by the consent of young St. Meurice, a first charge. Without such an arrangement, it would have been found very difficult to induce persons to advance so large a sum as that now required, at the tail of so many previous encumbrances.

It was calculated that the property would sell well, and that, besides the advantage derived from the payment of Lord Bewleigh's personal creditors, a large sum would be annually saved; since the loss of property by sales would be far less than equivalent to the yearly drain of interest on the mortgages.

So the mortgagees had received notice of payment of their capital, and amongst them Henry St. Meurice, as younger brother to Lord Bewleigh.

Immediately after the majority of his

nephew, St. Meurice received the following communication:

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,
"July, 1845.

"Sir,

"We are instructed, as solicitors to Lord Bewleigh, to apprise you that, in pursuance of the notice which you received from us in the month of January last, his Lordship and the Honourable Cosmo St. Meurice are now making arrangements for the payment of all persons holding mortgages on the Bewleigh estate.

"As representative of the younger branches of the family, in favour of whom a charge of ten thousand pounds was created by the late Lord Bewleigh and his father, I have now to request you to let me know to whom this sum can be paid in your name, whether

through your solicitors, or your London bankers, or directly to yourself.

"We are further instructed to inform you, that a bill is now in Parliament for the formation of a railway from C— to R—, both commercial and important towns, between which a direct communication is much required.

"It will be of great advantage to the family of which you are a member, that this scheme should proceed with vigour; since it will very materially benefit the property if carried out. The line must pass through the domain, and further, there is every probability that the village of Bewleigh, (where the station will be erected), may, from its situation, half-way between the points, grow into a town of some importance.

"Is it not then a matter worthy of your consideration, whether it were not a very pro-

fitable investment of part of the large sum which you shortly will have on hand, to purchase shares in the undertaking?

"Lord Bewleigh has purchased a considerable number, and, at the low price for which they may now be obtained, (with a prospect of a very great rise in their value), we are inclined to regard the speculation as an exceedingly profitable one.

"Should you be disposed to consider the matter, and wish for any information on the subject, we shall have great pleasure in affording you every assistance in our power.

"Perhaps you may consider the matter worthy a visit to London. Information can of course be given better personally, than by letter.

"We have the honour to be, &c.,

"FEEZY, DONHAM & CO."

Henry was much puzzled on receiving the above letter. He was far too indolent of spirit to embrace with vigour the proposal of any speculation, however excellent. But yet this large sum, of which he had hitherto so pleasantly received the interest at five per cent., now lay on his hands dormant and unprofitable. He must therefore make an exertion, and he felt that in any case a visit to London on the subject was absolutely necessary.

He showed the solicitor's letter to Florence, but she could give him no advice. She knew as little of railways as she did of the internal government of China. Scrip, debentures, &c., were all gibberish to her, but she always saw a great number of people at the stations whenever she travelled by rail, and therefore concluded that they must pay well. She therefore gave her husband no advice,

except that he should go to town, sift the matter, and visit Messrs. Feezy and Donham immediately.

To London, therefore, he went, leaving Florence at M——. He lost no time in consulting the solicitors who had written to him; and they neglected no opportunity of pressing on him the cause of the C— and R— railway, without informing him, of course, that Feezy, the senior partner, was himself one of the projectors, and that the respectable Mr. Donham had embarked to no small extent in the spec, and had further received a promise from Lord Bewleigh that, if he could induce Henry to invest some of his capital in the undertaking, he should feel so grateful to him, that he would, &c., &c.

"Speculation!" said Donham to Henry, "egad, Sir, it's no speculation at all! I'd as

soon invest *my* money (if I had any," modestly added he) "in the C— and R— railway, as in the three per cent. consols. Egad, Sir, I'd *rather* do it. Those funds are ticklish affairs to deal with, I can tell you, unless you're always in town, and able to watch them most narrowly. Ticklish things, egad, Sir, very ticklish;" and he took a huge pinch of snuff, offering his gold box to Henry.

Captain St. Meurice was much mystified, and little informed by these technical tirades. But the poor fellow, who had never yet formed an opinion of his own, began to be quite alarmed about the insecurity of the funds, and to imagine that a railroad was the only safe investment for capital.

"Could I not succeed in placing it upon a good mortgage?"

"Mortgage!—Egad, my dear Sir, in these

days it is a deuced good mortgage that pays four per cent., whereas the railway, Sir,—the railway may bring you in—twenty, thirty,—ay, forty per cent.! You see, Sir, there hasn't been much said as yet about this line; people have no idea of the real value of the shares; they are to be had now, Sir, for a mere nothing. Egad, Sir, in six months there'll be no buying them at any price: not at *any* price. Egad, Sir, there won't!"

"Well, I really see no objection to my buying a few shares . . ."

"A *few*, Sir! Take my advice, and buy boldly: a few shares do no one any good. If I had money to invest in the undertaking, and a line so important as the C— and R— were coming through a property of *mine*, egad, Sir, I'd not only invest money in shares, but I'd sit day after day on the provisional committee till I carried the bill,

and fairly saw the works commenced. Egad, Sir, that I would."

"Would you, really?" replied Henry. "Well, I'll give the matter due consideration."

"Consideration!" cried the echo, "there's no time to be lost in consideration. Strike while the iron's hot. Buy for the account, as the brokers say; and believe me you'll not repent having followed my advice."

* * * *

Many a time did Henry plod up to Lincoln's Inn before he could make up his mind to invest his money in shares. And when at last he was thoroughly caught in the trap so warily laid for him, he felt a misgiving as he affixed his signature to the deed

which made him a partner in the undertaking.

The brokers who attacked him on all sides left him no peace till he plunged headlong into the spec. He became a provisiona committee man, &c., in fact, found himself deeply implicated in the speculation, before he was aware of it. This was not from a propensity to gambling, from a love of making money; he was led step by step into the net, by the united force of a number of men who well knew the weakness of their victim, and their power of leading him into the path which it was so advantageous to them that he should follow.

After signing certain papers, which, he was assured, were mere formalities, he returned to M——, without a very clear idea with respect to his position, but with his head full of law terms and cant phrases,

which he tried to render intelligible to Florence, who soon became addled by explanations, which the explainer himself did not very clearly comprehend. He was too glad to forget his unpleasant visit to London in the pleasure of seeing Florence again—his dear Florence, whom, for the first time, he had left for the space of ten days, which had appeared ten ages to him.

He was, however, excessively grieved to find her looking so ill. After his absence, he was forcibly struck with the change that had taken place in her appearance, which he had not remarked so much when he was with her. He insisted on calling in a doctor, who, of course, recommended a southern climate, and a few other such cheap and easy remedies. But in truth the leech was right. A warm climate alone could save Florence from the sad end that awaited her! This was

of course out of the question. Henry had not the means to undertake such an expensive journey, and moreover, business required his presence in England.

"If the C— and R— railway succeed as well as I am led to suppose it will, then, dear Florence, I will get leave for six months, and we will go off to Italy."

For about a fortnight he heard no news of his speculation. He had consented that his name should be placed on the provisional committee, because, he was told, it would benefit the company; but he had stated at the same time, that he never could be present at the meetings, as his military duties required his presence at M——.

But one day he received a letter from his broker, stating that the bill had passed the House of Commons, and that the shares had risen considerably in consequence, and were

now at a high premium. He advised him also to purchase more shares even at the present premium, since they would, in all probability, rise far higher when the bill had passed the Lords, of which there could be no doubt. Henry consulted Messrs. Feezy and Donham, who gave him the like advice; so he bought a great quantity of shares in the expectation of realizing a large profit.

The bill came into the House of Lords, and ..... was thrown out! In vain did Lord Bewleigh plead its cause to the peers, it was of no avail! Some crotchetty old Marquis found that the line would pass through his property, and destroy his hunting. He got up a coalition among his friends, who declared that England would

soon be nothing but a monster gridiron, and they opposed the measure with such success, that it was lost by a large majority.

Sad news for poor Henry!—his shares became utterly worthless, and yet he was liable for the full amount of their supposed value—half his fortune! But a severer blow was yet in store for him; for, two days afterwards, he received the following letter from his broker:

"Bank Chambers,
"October, 1845.

"Sir,

"I regret to inform you that, in addition to the unfortunate ejectment of the bill for the formation of the C— and R— railroad, another catastrophe has occurred this day, with which it becomes my unpleasant duty to acquaint you. A fraud has been committed to an alarming extent,

and one of your co-directors, Mr. D——, has succeeded in escaping, and is supposed to have left the country, carrying off with him almost the whole amount of the present assets . . . ."

The letter fell from poor Henry's hand. He saw it all. He was responsible for all the sums which the swindler had taken. In truth, his position was a fearful one. He was answerable, not only for the sums due to the persons employed in carrying the bill through Parliament, but also to the shareholders, to whom the members of the provisional committee were responsible for the calls which had been made, and were of a considerable amount.

What should he do?

There was but one course to be pursued, and that was to leave England at once, if he

could do so without detection. But how to tell Florence? How to break to her the news of his fearful situation?

"O, God! O, God!" he raved, and tore his hair distractedly.

But no time must be lost. The step must be taken at once. If Florence knew the truth then, it might have the most fatal effects on her in her delicate state of health; and yet concealment was impossible. O, despair! despair! to think that he—the unsuspecting, the undesigning, the victim, should have been brought to this pass!

He told Florence that business of the greatest importance, connected with the C— and R— line, obliged him to go to town for a few days. He yet cherished a secret hope that some arrangement might be made with the creditors, and that he would

thus be enabled to retain his commission, and remain in England.

He arrived in London late on an October night. He knew not where to bend his steps, for he felt no assurance that he was not liable to arrest—in fact, he could not realize to himself his position. The blow which had come on him so suddenly, seemed to have half distracted him. At times he would persuade himself that he was not in reality so deeply involved as he thought; at others, he shrank from every gaze, seeing in each face the look of a creditor, or of a sheriff's officer armed with a writ.

Is there on earth a picture more desolate and more depressing than that of the west end of London on an October day? when every one who can escape, has left the gloomy town; when all the shutters of

every house are closed; when the streets are broken up, and the poles lighted with flaring gas-flames and cauldrons of boiling pitch, illuminating the faces of the grim-looking workmen. Does it not look, at night, like the last scene in "Don Giovanni?"

Such was the cheerless aspect of the place when Henry St. Meurice took up his abode in a dirty lodging-house, near Leicester Square. He thought himself safer from detection there than elsewhere, and, besides, it was not far from Lincoln's Inn, where he probably would have to go frequently. Alas! not so. One visit to Messrs. Feezy and Donham (or rather to the latter, for the other had gone to Boulogne quite lately, for the benefit of his wife's health), convinced him that he need not be troubled

to repeat it—that he was ruined; and that his person was not safe on this side of the Dover Channel.

His depression—nay, his despair, baffles all description. More than once did the fearful thought enter his brain, that in one instant he might free himself from his misery. But Florence and Edith, what would become of them? No! he would live for their sake.

To render his wretchedness complete, he received a letter from the physician who attended Florence, pressing his return, and stating that she was sadly worse; that he conceived her disease to be aggravated by some mental anxiety, though he could not induce her to confess the cause.

The fact was, poor Florence had seen in the newspaper an account of the sad *finale*

to the railway in which she knew her husband was concerned. She did not understand the technical explanation which was given; she did not comprehend the hopeless situation of her husband; but she saw that a catastrophe had occurred, and she feared that Henry had concealed the truth from her. This thought preyed on her mind, and the symptoms of consumption grew daily more alarming. Her cough was more frequent, and had a hollow, funereal sound, most painful to the hearer; her figure became emaciated, her cheek hectic, her strength less and less, until at last the doctor became so alarmed, that he wrote to Henry.

This letter plunged the unfortunate man into the deepest despair. He could bear the thought of any loss save that of his

dearly-loved Florence. He clasped his head tightly within his hands, fearing lest his brain should burst. It seemed to him as though the pressure alone prevented him from going mad.

He had almost forgotten poor Edith, who was enjoying herself at Llarnwair, little knowing the terrible state of her family at home. He now reflected that she might console him under the weight of his afflictions; at any rate that she would advise with him how to break the truth to Florence. He therefore wrote to her, as we have seen, and awaited her arrival with feverish anxiety.

Sad indeed was the meeting of the uncle and the niece! But after the first burst of grief, Edith showed wonderful self-command and firmness under the distressing circumstances.

She advised St. Meurice to leave the country at once; and she undertook to go alone to M——, and break the news to her aunt.

"O! but Edith! shall I not see her before I go? I cannot, cannot leave England, perhaps never to return, without—without seeing her again!"

He sobbed aloud.

"You shall see her, dear uncle. M—— is a very unwholesome place, and the air there is very injurious to her. I will bring her away, and take her to some sea-port; the fresh breeze may be of benefit to her. Do not wait our arrival here: indeed it is very unsafe for you to remain in London. Go down by night to Brighton; we will join you there, and you shall see us once more before you go."

He followed her advice. He went that night to Brighton, while she started on her painful mission.

PART II.

"... Sit thou a patient looker-on;
Judge not the play, before the play is done.
The plot has many changes, ev'ry day
Speaks a new scene, the last act crowns the play."

QUARLES.

CHAPTER I.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed."

OLD PROVERB.

HAVE our readers forgotten the melancholy sequel to this part of the tale, as seen in the "Glimpse of the Future," with which the narrative opened? Can they yet recall to mind the disastrous journey to Brighton; the meeting of Henry and his brother on the pier; the sad end of poor Florence; the fearful scene of Henry's arrest; the pitiable sitation of the unhappy Edith?

If all this still hold a place in their memory, let us proceed to follow the poor, bereaved girl through the trials that are yet in store for her.

It was a neat, comfortable, small house, that Rectory of St. Magdalene's, at Brighton. Unlike the majority of Brighton houses, it was solidly built; and the wind that howled round it, sighed and moaned in vain for admittance, and the heavy sleet knocked uselessly at the window; the little parlour was not the less snug and warm, the fire burnt not the less brightly, and the purr of the monster Angola cat, which lay on he rug revelling in the rays of heat, was audible above the turmoil without. But more genial—a merry homely sound—the

hissing and fuming of a large bronze urn, the cheerful rattle of cups and saucers, the opening and shutting of the caddy, and the bubbling noise of the little cataract between the urn and the teapot.

At the table sat a good-humoured elderly lady, in plain brown silk dress, a cap trimmed with broad white ribbon, and a very large frilled collar, fastened with a gigantic hair-broach. This was Mrs. Graham. Beside her, and intent upon a book which he held between his face and the scorching fire, sat her husband, the Reverend Mr. Graham, Rector of St. Magdalene's, Brighton. And a good specimen he was of the really good-hearted, pious minister, doing good to all who deserved his kindness; simple and pure of heart; serving his Divine Master, not in the spirit of pride or controversy, but in the genuine devotion of a religious heart.

Since deeds speak plainer than words, we need record no other evidence of his amiable and charitable disposition than the fact which has brought him under our notice: his conduct throughout the sad scenes which he had witnessed at the little inn in West Street, and his kind offer to Edith of a home in his own house, until she could be provided for.

And there she sat, the poor broken-hearted girl, dressed in the deepest mourning, which Mrs. Graham had ordered for her, saying she should repay her the trifling value of the clothes when a better time should arrive.

A better time! Poor girl, what hope had she of better times? Her only parents torn from her; the one by the remorseless hand of Death, and the other by the iron grasp of Justice. And Valerian! she dared not think

of him! He was at that moment in Italy, eagerly trying to discover some clue to his parentage. What news for him on his return!

True, she had not made to her aunt the promise which she had asked of her, although, had she lived one moment more, it would have been given, and would, from that moment, have been inviolable. But how could she now wed Marley? now that she possessed not a shilling in the world—now that the very clothes on her back had been accepted in charity!

She was, however, a girl of good sense; and she saw that in the dilemma in which she found herself now placed, she must exert herself, and not give way to despair. She could not continue a burden to the Grahams, and she determined to earn her own livelihood. She was well-informed, and mode-

rately accomplished; why should she not endeavour to procure a situation as governess or companion? She had applied to Mr. Graham on the subject, and he had promised to use his exertions in her behalf, requesting her, at the same time, to "make herself quite at home in his house, until he should hear of something that might suit her."

He was as good as his word, and lost no opportunity of making her feel that she was a welcome guest; and he knew so well how to minister to her troubled spirit, that she found the greatest comfort in his soothing words of consolation, and derived fortitude to bear up against her misfortunes, from his well-timed precepts and hope-breathing encouragement.

After tea was over, he called Edith aside, and said:

"Dear Miss Tyrell, I am happy to say that

I have just heard of a situation that may suit you. Take this letter, read it carefully to-night in your own room, and to-morrow we will talk the matter over together."

Edith thanked him, and placed the letter in her pocket. They talked no more on the subject that evening, which passed in cheerful conversation, and in the delights of a little simple music. Then came the touching form of family prayer, and the party retired early to bed.

When alone in her room, Edith proceeded to read the letter which Mr. Graham had given her. It was dated "Paris," and ran as follows:

"Rue du Cirque, No. —,
"November, 1845.

"Dear Sir,

"I am really *dans le plus grand embarras du monde.* Only fancy that tiresome

Miss Jones writing to me, immediately on my arrival in Paris, to throw me over—actually to throw me over! or what is quite the same, begging she might be allowed to defer her departure until her father was better. Now you must see, my dear Sir, that it is *tout ce qu'il y a de plus impossible* that I can wait until the man chooses to get well again! Now, dear Sir, as you were very kind about getting me Miss Jones, do, like a good, amiable creature, find me a *remplaçante*. I cannot really be burdened with the entire charge of my little Evelyn any longer; she is a very dear child, but *très bruyante*, and disturbs me in my *travaux*, for, *entre nous soit dit*, I am writing another novel, which is progressing but slowly, as I have no one to write *sous la dictée*.

"You know exactly what I want, and I cannot find any person to suit me here. If

you saw the creatures they send me from Galignani's!

"She must write a good clear hand, for she will have to copy my book, and some knowledge of music, to save a master. I am not so particular about French, Evelyn has a master for that. In Paris they are not expensive. "A prophet in his own country," you know the rest.

"I have just arrived here; Lord B. preceded me by a few days, and we have *un hôtel charmant* in the Rue du Cirque, close to the Champs-Elysées, where little Evelyn and her governess can walk, &c. We are all well. How I pity you *là-bas* in the fogs of England; here the weather is quite lovely. Do let me hear from you soon, and believe me,

"Dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"EUPHROSYNE BEWLEIGH.

"P. S.—You know all about the salary, £50 a-year; for the morals and all that, *je m'en rapporte à vous.*"

Edith read the letter through before she looked at the signature, and was rather amused at the style; but when she discovered who was the writer, her consternation was great! *She* go as governess into Lord Bewleigh's family! Lord Bewleigh who had led her dear uncle into the scrape, and never offered his assistance to get him out of it! No; that could never be. She would rather . . . .

What?

O sad alternative! She must either remain a burden to the kind family who had so charitably "sheltered the houseless;" or else accept the office of a menial in the house of one who had been the originator of all

her uncle's misfortunes! She determined to open her heart to the clergyman next day, and abide by the advice he should give her.

His counsel was, that she should accept the offer. He showed her, that after all, the Bewleighs were not personally related to her; and moreover endeavoured to persuade her, that Lord Bewleigh had fallen a victim as well as her uncle to the unfortunate railway catastrophe. Edith had never been told of Bewleigh's conduct to Henry on the occasion of his marriage; how cruelly and heartlessly he had written of her poor aunt; and so with heavy heart, she consented to let Mr. Graham write to Lady Bewleigh on the subject.

"They will not know who you are; give your name merely as Miss Tyrell, and as you

have not met Lord or Lady Bewleigh, they will never imagine that you are the adopted child of their brother. Indeed, from the estrangement which has not ceased to exist, according to your account, since the youth of the brothers, I should almost be inclined to doubt whether they even know of your existence.

"But what will my uncle say?"

"He will say that you are a noble, generous girl, who in the hope of doing him a service, have bravely exposed yourself to annoyances from which many of your age would have shrunk."

"How can this step be of service to him?"

"Lady Bewleigh is a frivolous and vain woman, but I do not believe her heartless. Who knows but that this is a dispensation of

Providence which may make your future intercession of some avail with Lord Bewleigh? When you have ingratiated yourself with her Ladyship, you may find an opportunity of declaring yourself, and urging,—perhaps successfully,—an appeal in favour of your uncle? You will find your new charge a sweet child; she is one of the most winning, amiable little girls I ever met, and I firmly believe, you will like your new abode far better than you imagine."

Buoyed up with this hope, Edith hesitated no longer. The clergyman wrote to Lady Bewleigh, saying he was fortunate enough to be in a position to recommend a young person who might suit her in every respect; the answer came begging that this *trouvaille* might lose no time in starting for Paris. And ten days after that time, Edith became a passenger in the 'Ruby,' provided by kind Mrs.

Graham with a small sum of money, and a few necessaries, the value of which was to be repaid when she received her salary.

With many a tear did Edith Tyrell part from her newly-found friends. In the hour of adversity, kindness is doubly "pleasant to receive." When all around is dark and drear, and the spirit is broken under the weight of sorrow, how prized is the gentle hand of friendliness; how tenfold dear the voice that pours the balm of charity and brotherly love into the wounds of the heart! It is the brightest ray shed by the world's glaring but deceitful light! Truly it is well that affliction should sometimes overtake us, that some ministering spirit may then prove to us that all on earth is not so vain as we believe, that in the heart of some there

yet lurks a spark of the divine light of mercy, which the Creator implanted into the heart of man, when he made him "after his own image."

CHAPTER II.

"Alas! Life's path may be unsmooth!
Her way may lie through rough distress!
Then, who her pangs and pains will soothe,
Her sorrows share, and make them less?"

BURNS.

"La patience est l'art d'espérer."

VAUVENARGUES.

EDITH was, at first, sadly bewildered by the magnificence and display which she witnessed in the Rue du Cirque. She was alarmed at everything she saw. The tall footmen, in their gorgeous liveries, frightened her; Lady

Bewleigh's haughty manner awed her, and even Reginald's civilities (for he was polite to every woman) occasioned her more nervousness than pleasure. In fact, she was sadly shaken by all the events that had succeeded each other with such fearful rapidity. Scarcely a month had elapsed since she had left Llarnwair—and what had she not suffered since that time!

She tried to bear up against the depression of spirit which had seized her; when alone in her room, where she passed the long evenings, she argued with herself that this timidity was foolish, that really all were very kind to her, and that it was her duty to exert herself in her new position. But when the next day arrived, and with it the bustle and confusion of countless servants, equipages, the messages about Miss Evelyn, &c. &c. her good resolves

vanished into thin air, and her timidity and shyness returned.

Her only comfort was in the society of the sweet child entrusted to her care. And a lovely, blue-eyed little creature it was, with such a sweet temper, such affectionate and winning manners! Poor Edith was quite touched with the infantine kindness of the dear little girl, when, on the second evening of her arrival, she rushed up to the school-room, with her tiny hands full of cakes and well-squeezed sweetmeats from dessert, and insisted upon staying to see her eat them! And Edith did eat them, and eat them with delight:—how sweet are the offerings of childish love!

Evelyn St. Meurice was nearly twelve years old, but she had ever been the smallest and most infantine of children. She really did

not look older than seven or eight, and her frame was most delicate and frail.

Edith found it pleasant indeed to inform such a spirit. The hard task of tuition becomes a pleasure, when information is gladly received and cherished by the infant mind.

One part of her duty was far less to her taste; that was the task of writing, under Lady Bewleigh's dictation, the ineffable nonsense which the latter chose to commit to paper as a three volume novel.

But at last she acquired an almost mechanical way of doing this, and wrote down, with tolerable accuracy, what Lady Bewleigh told her, without an idea of the meaning of the words she almost unconsciously strung together.

And thus day succeeded day, and week fol-

lowed week, and brought no change in the routine life of our heroine. She received no letter from Valerian, and this occasioned her much anxiety; not that she doubted his constancy, but she felt sure that his silence arose from his inability to send her good news. She believed him to be still in Italy, and she reflected that the uncertainty of the post was great, and that a letter might at this time be chasing her through England from town to town, since she had left no directions about the forwarding of her few letters.

She had written to St. Meurice, informing him of the step she had taken, and asking his approval of her conduct. He had replied in a letter full of expressions of sorrow at having so impoverished her as to oblige her thus to lower herself; but applauding her warmly for her fortitude under

the misfortunes that had assailed her. The tone of his answer was one of the utmost depression; he stated that his case now appeared perfectly hopeless; that the defrauded creditors would hear of no compromise, and that each succeeding day brought in fresh claims, which seemed to be endless. He told her that the only possibility of salvation now remaining, was that Lord Bewleigh and Cosmo might be induced to assist him, and that by thus liquidating the demands of some few very pressing creditors, he might be able to leave his prison, and then fly the country.

Edith saw that any appeal to Lord or Lady Bewleigh at present would be premature, and probably foil her plan altogether. But she despaired of ever arriving at that point in their good graces which should

enable her to urge her suit with success, for she appeared to have made no advance in favour since her arrival; Lord Bewleigh was not less distant and civil, and the authoress looked upon her merely as a writing and teaching machine, wound up by the payment of so much per quarter.

One day, little Evelyn announced to her governess that her brother Cozzy (as she called him) was to arrive in Paris that evening.

"He is such a big boy now, you can't think; and he's got a great large pair of whiskers over his mouth, and he scrubs me so when he kisses me."

"Do you love your brother very much?"

"O yes! that is when he's good. Some-

times he's naughty, and teazes me, and says naughty things to mamma; but generally he's very good, and brings me all sorts of pretty toys; and two or three times, he's taken me out in his cab in London, and driven me all about the Park."

"He is in the army, is he not?" inquired Edith.

"O yes! that he is," replied the pretty prattler, "and he's got such a smart dress, all over gold, and all sorts of pretty things, and a great big sword that makes such a noise when he walks about."

Edith wondered whether he was as kind of heart as his sister, and determined to observe him well, and discover whether he were more impressible than his parents. She almost began to cherish a hope that, through him, she might perhaps obtain some

boon for her uncle, since Henry had said that Cosmo had joint power with Lord Bewleigh to relieve him from his unhappy situation.

CHAPTER III

NEXT day Edith and Evelyn went out for their accustomed walk in the Champs Elysées. It was a brilliant winter day, such as January days are in Paris. The gay season was at its height, and equipages of every sort paraded their magnificence in the great avenue. The air of cheerfulness apparent on every face worked its effect even on Edith, and dissipated the gloom that usually weighed upon her spirits. She listened with pleasure to

the prattle of her little companion, as she related to her all the sayings of her brother Cozzy, who had arrived on the previous evening. Edith had not yet seen him, but she listened with attention to the details which the child afforded her, that she might estimate his character, and her consequent chance of success.

"And he says he's brought me such a bee-autiful doll from London, and she opens and shuts her eyes, and she dresses and undresses, and she's got combs and brushes, and—O there he is!"

The child darted from her, and rushed up to a very tall young man, who was advancing towards them. He stooped to talk to Evelyn, while his companion, a man much older than himself, stood still, and fixed on Edith such an impertinent

look, that she drew down her veil, and soon took the child's hand and walked on.

Cosmo was really a good-looking fellow. His appearance was much improved by his large moustache, which served to conceal the hard lines that would else have been discernible around his mouth. His eye was deep-sunken, but its expression was much softened by the long eyelashes that veiled it. His chief defect was the want of height in his brow, and the slight frown which always sat there.

His companion, on whose arm he leant, as they walked on after the short parley with Evelyn, was no other than the Honourable Mr. Phastman, who may be remembered as one of Lord Bewleigh's guests in the palmy days of Bewleigh Hall. He was at that time one of the exquisites about town, and

though excessively dull, had succeeded in holding a certain place in society, and assuming airs of exceedingly coxcombish impudence, to which—most unaccountably—many had submitted, who, from their superiority in rank, in talent, and in every other respect, might easily have put a stop to his presumption.

His reign in London was not, however, a long one. For a length of time the faithful Cerberus at the door of his apartments in St. James's informed the tradespeople who applied for their bills, that "he'd ave nun o' their himperance, that he was'nt in the abit o' tellin o' lies, and that if he said as his master warn't hin town (or was'nt at ome, or was most partickler hengaged), wy then he was—and there was a hend of it." But at last this truthful individual's veracious assertions

failed of their wonted success, and one day the Honourable Quickly Phastman discovered that "London was a dam place after awl, and that he'd a doosid good mâind to trawy Paris."

His day was now quite past, but he could not bear the idea of getting old; so the wig, and the stays, and the rouge pot, and the false calves were called in to perform Medea's task, and with the assistance of plenty of stuffing in his coat, and highly glazed boots, (in which he walked very slowly, that he might on no account crack the polish), he managed to cut what *he* considered a "doosid respectable figaw," and being completely "used up," applied himself to the honourable trade of "teaching young ideas how to shoot," and giving such of the rising generation as he could ensnare, the benefit of his "expiawience" in matters in which they had "bettaw be guided

by a fellow who's seen something of the world, and can put them up to a thing or two."

He affected to be on the best terms with all the pretty actresses in Paris—and so he was. They cultivated his acquaintance, finding him an excellent means of introduction to the young Englishmen of fortune who visited the gay capital.

"Dis donc—mon p'tit Farcemanne—tu vas être bien gentil et me présenter ce joli garçon — tu sais ce gros ingleech qui a ce joli cabriolet. Il doit avoir joliment des écus ç'ui-là, et mon Arthur ne vaut p'us rien—i' n'a pas l'sou!"

The delighted "ci-devant" would then propose to the said "joli garçon" to go with him to the theatre, where this frail creature, prepared for the attack, sent side-glances into the stage-box, until at last Phastman would observe:

"My dear fellow, I do b'lieve that pretty geeurl is quite smitten with you. She hasn't taken her âyes off the box since we've been here."

"Do you really think so?"

"'Pon my word, I do. Shall I introduce you?"

"Can you?"

"To be sure, I can: she's a great friend of mâine."

Then came a charming supper at the "Café Anglais" or the "Maison d'Or," for which of course the "joli garçon" paid, and which his respectable Mentor devoured with infinite gusto, winking over his Champagne glass at the tender-hearted belle; both chuckling as they thought of the success of their plan.

As soon as he heard of Cosmo's arrival in

Paris, he posted off to the Rue du Cirque, assured the young man that he was one of his father's oldest friends, and had known him (Cosmo) ever since he was born. St. Meurice was quite unacquainted with Paris, and accepted with pleasure Phastman's offer of serving as his *cicerone* about the town. It was proposed that he should at once commence his apprenticeship by taking a turn in the Champs Elysées.

"That's a doosid fâin geeurl walking with your sister."

"Is she?" replied Cosmo; "I did not remark her."

"Pooh, nonsense—he! he!—don't tell me that. What! have such a poutty woman as that in the haouse, and you never remark her! Don't tell me—I know you better than that."

"Upon my word, it's true. She only arrived lately, and I only came last night; and had never seen her before, I assure you."

"Well, well, I won't press the subject—don't you ever tell me more than you lâike, ye know; but if ever you *do* tell me anything, you'll fâind me daiv'lish discreet and all that sort o' thing."

"I have no cause to prove your discretion in this instance: you know the exact truth of the matter."

"Well, then, my boy, I advâise you to have a look at her when you go home; she's worth it, I can tell you; a dem handsome girl, 'pon my soul. What is she? A sort of guv'ness, I s'pose. Those women do give 'emselves such cust airs, that's the worst of 'em; but I really advâise you to see what she's made of; and now I must leave you. I've got a little affair at four 'clock, and it's

doosid near the time now. We dâin together, don't we? Very well. Don't be later than seven; people dâin so infernally urly in this place. So good bâye."

"Good bye."

And so they parted.

Cosmo walked homewards, and in one of the by-alleys met his sister and her governess. This time he did look at Edith, not forgetting his friend's advice, and she looked smilingly at him, remembering that she must win him if she could, and use her influence to a good purpose.

Cosmo mistook the purport of that smile; he thought he had certainly made an impression; that the *œillade* which he had sent through what Evelyn called his "spectacle in one eye," had sunk deep into the heart of the poor governess, and that he had but to urge his suit with vigour, to add

another name to his list of easy conquests.

He walked with them a little way, and began the conversation with the most common-place remarks. By degrees he adopted a greater levity of style, which somewhat surprised the unsuspecting girl; but as she had seen something of barrack life, and knew that this was the tone of some regiments, she attributed it entirely to that cause, and determined to overlook his failings, if she should find that he possessed, what often exists under an unpromising exterior, a kindly spirit and a warm heart.

She rather encouraged his visits to the school-room. He frequently brought, by way

of pretext, some new plaything for his sister; but after a time he sought no excuse, and often intruded himself even when Evelyn was below in the drawing-room. Yet, in spite of himself, he felt a respect for Edith which put to flight the determination he had mustered at the door, of declaring himself boldly, and having "done with it." He did not doubt from the manner in which she received him, that she was but waiting for his advances to respond to them without hesitation; why then conld he not utter his sentiments? Why was he—the *roué*, the despiser of the sex, abashed and silenced before the meek, the gentle Edith? She was, indeed, far from suspecting his design, but he was just as wrong in his suppositions as to the cause of the reception he met in the school-room. His friend, the Honour-

able Mr. Phastman, left him no peace on the subject, and questioned him perpetually as to the success of his little affair with the pretty governess. He replied with an evasive smile and a blush, for he felt ashamed to confess what he considered as his weakness; and so Mr. Phastman called him *mauvais sujet* in bad French, and Cosmo felt bound to merit the flattering appellation.

Matters went on thus for a fortnight; both Cosmo and Edith were dying to say something to each other, which neither dared to utter; and the visits to the school-room became more frequent, and yet no result arose from their repetition.

"Have you got your penknife, and everything you want, Miss Tyrell, before you be-

gin; because of all things I hate interruption; it disturbs the flow of my ideas, and destroys the unity of my story."

"I am quite at your Ladyship's command, and have everything here that I require."

"Well, then, let us commence. Where did we leave off? Oh, I think it was just where Alphonso gives her the fatal letter. Just read the last sentence, if you please, Miss Tyrell."

Edith reads:

"'She seized the letter from his grasp, and with tears in her eyes, read the fatal account of the overwhelming catastrophe . . .' that is the last word I have written, my Lady."

"Well, well, I really forget what I meant to make her do next; but I think she had better faint, only who's to catch her? O, I know. Now write, if you please.

"'She fainted,' no, 'she swooned,' it's more poetical. 'She swooned, and at that moment, the brave Roderick sprang from his concealment, and catching her in his arms, broke her fall. He lifted her as if she had been a child, and bore her fainting form to the interior of the . . .'"

Here the door opened, and Cosmo entered the room, looking for some gloves which he had left there. He was in the full effulgence of evening costume.

"Where do you dine, Cosmo?"

"Why, I told you I was going to dine with Phastman and some men at the *café*. Dash those gloves! where can they be?"

"Never mind them now, my dear; we are very busy and don't wish to be interrupted."

He left the room.

"Now, Miss Tyrell, if you please, we'll resume. Pray read me the last few words,

that I may gather my distracted thoughts, which that tiresome boy has completely upset."

Edith reads:

"'He lifted her as if she had been a child . . .'"

"Why, what's the matter, child? you're crying."

"I beg pardon, my Lady; I did my best to restrain my tears, but I received a letter this morning which has distressed me deeply, and I have been very unhappy all day."

"Well, well, never mind it now; dear, how provoking! my publisher wrote to me to-day, to say that my book ought really to come out . . ."

"I will do my best to satisfy your Ladyship," said Edith, drying her tears. "Pray allow me to go on writing."

"Well, 'been a child—fainting form,' hem—hem! 'and bore her fainting form into the interior of the castle. Summon her waiting-maids, exclaimed he, with' . . . with . . . what-d'ye call 'em voice; what's the name of the man who had such a loud voice, you know?"

"Stentor," suggested Edith.

"That's it; 'with stentorian voice; and let her Moorish palfrey be caparisoned to depart in an hour. Here, sirrah, take this letter to . . .'"

But here the door was opened with violence, and Bewleigh rushed frantically into the room. He tried to speak, but words failed him. He staggered on to a chair. Lady Bewleigh, dreadfully alarmed, seized his hand, exclaiming:

"Bewleigh, for Heaven's sake, what is the matter?"

He gasped out these words:

"Oh, God! my brother—my brother Henry—is—dead! He has—cut his throat!"

A loud scream and a heavy fall!

Edith lay senseless on the floor!

The news was but too true! Poor Henry had fallen by his own hand. For some time past had he been ailing, and the doctor who attended him could ascribe no physical cause to his gradual sinking. It was the weight of misfortune that preyed upon his mind. In body he became daily more attenuated; in mind he grew hourly more apathetic, and often appeared to wander, so unconnected were the sentences he muttered between his teeth.

At other times he would suddenly rise

from this state of profound depression into one of feverish excitement; then he might be seen pacing his wretched room with hurried step, and writing long letters, which he would afterwards tear into small fragments, and burn, bit by bit, with the greatest care. In fact, his brain was affected. The physician saw this plainly, but hoped that he was yet within the pale of medical treatment. He desired the turnkey to watch him narrowly, and to inform him without loss of time of any change that might come over the ordinary tenour of his conduct.

One night the doctor had remained with him later than usual. The patient was in one of his highly excitable stages, and the doctor almost feared to leave him alone. He had complained loudly of his brother's conduct towards him; he had lamented with

burning tears the loss of his dear wife—the departure of Edith — the desertion of all who once surrounded and loved him. The doctor administered a narcotic draught, hoping to allay the excitement and the fever, and left him at a late hour, after giving renewed instructions to the turnkey not to absent himself, and to look in two or three times during the night. In the morning he returned; the turnkey opened the door, and both recoiled with horror at the spectacle before them.

The wretched man lay on the floor, weltering in a pool of blood that escaped from his throat, in which there was a large and deep gash. The instrument of his destruction—an open razor—lay beside him on the floor. . . .

CHAPTER IV.

"Que l'esprit du vertige et des bruyants repas
A l'ange du plaisir nous porte dans ses bras!
Allons! chantons Bacchus, l'amour et la folie!
Buvons au temps qui passe, à la mort, à la vie!
Oublions et buvons;—vive la liberté!
Chantons l'or et la nuit, la vigne et la beauté!"

ALFRED DE MUSSET.

"No tongue hath force
To alter me from honest:
If maidens would, men's words would have no power;
A virgin's honour is a crystal tower,
Which, being weak, is guarded with good spirits;
Until she basely yields, no ill inherits."

CYRIL TOURNEAU. *The Revenger's Tragedy.*

THE dinner at the Café —— was bril-

liant and noisy. The champagne frothed gaily over the long glasses, whose narrow limits it despised. Joviality and *laisser-aller* were here the order of the day; and the fair ones who graced the feast, seemed to enjoy the boisterous mirth quite as much as their companions. All the noblest of the young men of Paris, the very *élite* of the *Club des Moutards* and of the *Jockey*, were assembled round the convivial board. Mirrors reflected and multiplied tenfold the glare of the brilliant chandeliers, whose glass drops glistened with the light of countless wax candles: the handsome service of plate dazzled the eye, which found no rest in turning to the sparkling jewels, and yet more sparkling eyes of the lady guests. Here might be recognised many of the favourites of the Parisian public, who nightly enchanted the playgoers with their clever impersona-

tions. There sits the lovely B—n, the pet of the *Français*. Listen to that laugh, how sweet, how merry! Last night she infected with that sound all the serious audience of the first French theatre, when, as *Nicole*, she fell exhausted on the stage from excess of hilarity, at the absurd figure of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. Further may be heard the piercing nasal voice, so dear to the frequenters of the Palais Royal, of the impudent and witty D—t. She has seen the rise and fall of many a *célébrité*, but her fall never has come, and never will, so long as she can walk the boards. Hark at her quick repartee! What a book might be made of the clever things she has said!

Next to that short man with dark hair, sits the Jewish-faced J——h, blazing in diamonds which he has given her; beside her the slim but elegant figure of the lady-

like D——e, who has spent more money than all her rivals put together, but who is, *en revanche*, the best dressed woman in Paris. She knows better than to load herself with jewellery on this occasion, though the contents of her jewel-case could eclipse all the riches displayed here. Her plain dress of white muslin is fastened with a brooch formed of one single diamond; but such a diamond! it would buy the necklace of the *piquante* F——c, who sits near her!

Phastman and Cosmo are the only two Englishmen of the party, but this is no bar to the latter; he talks French as well as he speaks English; and his mentor manages to *baragouiner* a sort of medley of the two languages, to the great ausmement of the sprightly *blonde* who sits between him and Cosmo, as she throws herself back in her chair in a fit of laughter, when the old beau

asks her if she will have some of the *jambe de mouton,* which he is carving.

This merry little sprite is Cosmo's *chère amie.* Phastman had early provided him with so necessary an appendage to the completeness of an *élégant;* and be it said in her praise, it was rather an *affaire de cœur* with her, since all those bracelets and jewels were the gift of a rich old banker, who played the part of the husband, while Cosmo performed that of the *amant,* in this very correct *ménage.*

The last course is cleared, and the costly dessert now adorns the table. Here is luxury indeed. See that large dish of strawberries which rises in rosy pyramid, though the Seine is frozen, and the party have been in sleighs to St. Germain. These delicate and dainty ladies think them *exquises* and *adorables* now; in spring they would be

voted *ordinaires* and *bien communes.* Mark how rapidly the wine passes, and how ready are the crystal goblets for a fresh supply when it returns! The uproar becomes louder and louder, glasses are broken, bottles upset, and streams of the red liquor flow across the table, staining the costly dresses of the ladies, who, much excited with the repeated draughts of the sparkling liquid, heed not the destruction of so unimportant an article. One of the prudest of the party is vainly endeavouring to wipe from her dress the stain of the wine which has fallen upon it.

"Je ne veux pas rentrer avec ma robe toute tachée, Mesdames, je tiens beaucoup à ma réputation—moi."

"Ah bah!" replied D——t, "vous tenez toujours aux bagatelles."

This lively sally is received with shouts of laughter and applause. Then a song is

called for. Up starts the same witty charmer, and gives forth, with unequalled energy and spirit, one of the lively but questionable *chansons* of Nadaud.

"Brava, Brava!—Encore, encore!"

The tumult rises louder and louder; the songs are now beyond all restraint—the orgy is at its height.

At last the clock strikes twelve; and one of the bright-eyed Cinderellas, who has played truant to her liege lord to be present at the feast, rises from table, and hurries home. This is the signal for a general break up. There is much seeking for lost gloves, handkerchiefs, bracelets, shoes, &c., for everything has fallen pell-mell under the table, including the Honourable Mr. Phastman, whose head will no longer bear these excesses, but who is resolved to go on to the

last, playing the youngster — interesting stripling!

Cosmo finds on rising that he has some difficulty in keeping his balance; and it is not the refraction of the mirrors alone that makes him see more wax-candles than are actually burning.

He hands Pauline, his little *blondette*, to her carriage, and prepares to follow her in:

"Ah ça! qu'est-ce que tu fais?

"Je monte avec toi."

"Pas du tout, mon p'tit bichon, tu vas rentrer bien genti'ment chez toi tout seul."

"Quelle folie—eh! pourquoi faire?"

"Pour faire c'que tu voudras; quant à moi, mon vieux m'attend à la maison: en vérité tu n'as pas d' chance. Bonsoir, mon chéri, sois bien sage! A demain! à demain! fouette cocher!"

The smart little *coupé* rolls off, leaving the disappointed Cosmo alone on the pavement. He will not be seen thus jilted by his companions, who are following him down the stairs, so he makes his way home as fast as his reeling head and tottering legs will allow.

Very differently had the hours passed with Edith! The wretched girl had remained insensible for nearly an hour, and the return to consciousness had occasioned her acute suffering. Lady Bewleigh had forborne from asking her any questions, although she and her husband had been sorely puzzled to divine why the news of a stranger's death should have produced so violent an effect. The only conclusion they arrived

at was that a similar occurrence must, at some previous time, have taken place in her family, perhaps recently, since she had worn deep mourning ever since her arrival; and that the suddenness of the shock, reminding her of the event, had caused her to faint.

When she completely recovered her senses, she found herself lying on her bed. Beside her stood an old nurse, who had evinced much kindness towards her ever since her arrival.

"Where am I? what has happened?" were her first words.

"You are in your own room, my dear Miss, and much better, thank goodness! but you have been very ill, and quite senseless for a long time. What made you go off in that sudden way?"

Edith hid her face in her hands, and wept bitterly:

"O! I remember all now!" she cried; "I remember all! it was not a dream!"

She sobbed as though her heart would break.

"Don't take on so; don't now, indeed you shouldn't. Do take a little of this nice stuff, and try to go to sleep. Shall I put you to bed?"

"No, no thank you; leave me, O! leave me to weep alone. It must be late, and you want rest. Good night—good night!"

"It is near eleven o'clock, Miss, and I will leave you now. If you want anything, you've only to ring this bell. God bless you, Miss. I hope you'll be well to-morrow."

She left the room.

Edith felt relieved by her departure. When affliction is beyond the reach of consolation, the very offices of kindness we receive are a burden, and rather irritate, than alleviate,

mental suffering. She tried to follow the good old woman's advice, and endeavoured to sleep. But her head was burning, her brain appeared on fire, and she turned from side to side, seeking for rest in every new position, and finding none. Her thoughts would not let her slumber; her agitation increased in proportion to her endeavours to tranquillise herself. At last she could bear her recumbent posture no longer. She sprang from the bed, and walked with feeble steps into the adjoining school-room. She then opened her desk, and prepared to write. Her hand shook, and with difficulty did she shape the letters. How different from those usually formed by her pretty, delicate hand!

She wept no longer; the flow of tears had ceased; but her eyeballs burned and throbbed, and she could scarce collect her scattered thoughts to indite the following letter:

"Dearest Valerian!

"Your letter, which reached me but this day, has proved but the least of the sorrows which have broken my spirit since I have seen you. Especially this day, O Valerian! my brain feels as if it were rent asunder, and I scarce can write. So multiplied are my misfortunes, that I scarce know where to begin. You think you have suffered much because your long search has proved fruitless, because you can gain no information of your parents. Dear Valerian, it were far better never to know them, than to lose them as I have lost mine. The thought makes me shudder, and I can hardly guide my pen to write the dreadful truth. My beloved parents, for such they were to me, are—no more! One has fallen a victim to the dreadful scourge—consumption; the other—O no, I cannot, cannot write it!

"And I, Valerian, and I! Left alone in the world, a menial in a strange house, what hope is there for me? Your love, dear as it is to me, the only ray of light in the dense gloom that surrounds me—your love, of what avail is it now?

"My heart is broken, and I could never be happy, even with you. I am now—a beggar! dependant for the very clothes I wear, for the very bread I eat, on the caprice, the charity of others. O, Valerian! pity me, pity me—for of pity alone can I now partake. Love is vain, love is a fiction which never can be realised. Better, far better, that I had never known its power, then should I have fallen under the weight of my woes—whereas it has kept me alive merely to feel its vanity, its uselessness. Yet do I cherish it fondly—Valerian, the thought that there is yet one being who loves me, though he is far away, is

more precious to me now—far more precious, now that all else that I have loved is gone from me, than ever it was in the happy days of prosperity.

"O! Valerian! love me, love . . ."

A loud knock at the door.

The clock has long struck twelve . . . what new calamity can have occurred? Who can knock at this hour? . . .

With palpitating heart and trembling step does Edith glide towards the door, and open it slightly. . .

A violent push forces it against her, Cosmo enters the room, and reeling, falls heavily into the chair that Edith has just occupied.

"Sir, what can you want at this hour—what has happened?—I am . . ."

"I've just come to tell you all about it—(hic)—" said he, in a voice thick with wine,

" so sit down now, and let's have a talk, and we'll soon make it all right, I know."

" I do not understand you."

" O yes, you do though—you know dev'-lish well what I'm up to, don't you, my precious beauty ?" He attempted to rise, but the effort was vain, and he sank back in the chair.

" Sir,—you are not—you are not in your senses, do you know where you are ? Pray, Sir, leave this room, it is late, you will be overheard !"

" No, no, I sha'nt—they're all sound asleep in the house. It's no use, I must tell you what (hic) I've been going to tell you a long time. Edith, my beauty, I love you—'pon my soul I do . . . "

Edith started back with affright. She trembled violently, and leant against the table for support. " Sir, leave this room,

you are not sober; I beseech, I implore you to leave this room. I . . . "

"Now don't, now—now don't talk so loud; they'll hear your voice in the next room. I don't mean any—(hic)—offence; I don't indeed, if you'll only be sensible, and hear what I've got—(hic)—to say. I really am deuced fond of you—I have always been fond of you since I met you in the Champs Elysées —I have—and you know it—you do."

"I, Sir, I know it! O this—this is an insult which I cannot brook. I know it! I am engaged to another—I am engaged to marry . . . ."

"Marry—ha, ha, ha! so you've got a lover in the back-ground, have you? O, this long letter's to the dear fellow, I suppose."

He took up her letter, and held it to the candle.

"Give me that letter," she screamed, rather than said: "give me that letter this instant! Sir, do you pretend to be a gentleman? That letter this instant! and quit the room, or I ring the bell, call for assistance, and rouse the house. If you do this, I will spare you the degrading discovery of your present state, but I will have that letter."

She made an attempt to snatch it from him, but he held her tightly at a distance with his left hand, while, with his right he extended the paper towards the candle.

"'Dearest Va—Va—Valerian.' Upon my word, not a bad—(hic)—beginning; what a dam fine name the fellow's got—'your letter, which reached me to-day'—O, he writes to to you, does he? Well done, indeed, my little prude, who don't understand me, don't know what I mean. O, you don't! Indeed.

And you dare—(hic)—to say that you haven't encouraged me in every way, my virtuous Miss. Wanted me, p'rhaps to marry you——to hook me—marry you, egad!"

Edith saw the dreadful truth—he had mistaken her kind manner towards him for an encouragement in . . . . She groaned aloud, and hid her face in her hands.

He rose, and seized her wrists.

"Now don't cry—there's nothing men—(hic)—hate like seeing women snivelling. I'm not angry with you, 'pon my word I'm not, only be sensible—do, now. A pretty creature like you wasn't meant to be a d——governess. I'm deuced well off, 'pon my word I am. The governor gives me a lot of money, and you shall have all you like—you shall! I don't care a hang for Pauline—(hic)—not I. I'll send her to the devil if

you wish it. I'll do anything you tell me—'pon my word I will."

Edith could hear no more. She could not speak: but she made a violent effort to free herself from his grasp.

Then came a fearful struggle. She screamed loudly for help, but no one was near, save little Evelyn. Cosmo stared wildly at her with hideous, bloodshot eyes, and held her wrists with all the violence of which he was capable. But his grasp was not very firm. Edith leaned to one side in the struggle, and this threw him off his balance. He fell heavily on the floor. His head struck the corner of the fender, and he was stunned. He let go his hold. With one cry of thankfulness to heaven, she threw the letter into the fire, took up her desk, ran into her bedroom, and locked the doors. There she collected a few things, which she hastily tied into

a bundle, threw on a cloak and a bonnet, and rushed wildly down the stairs. Not another instant would she remain in that house. She passed through the hall-door, unlocking it as noiselessly as she could, and ran frantically across the yard.

The *porte cochère* was closed. She woke the *concierge*, said that some one was very ill, and that she was going in quest of a doctor. The heavy gate opened, she passed through, and it closed slowly behind her.

CHAPTER V.

"O! scathful harm, condition of poverte,
With thirst, with cold, with hunger so confounded,
To asken helpe thee shameth in thine herte,
If thou non aske, so sore art thou ywounded,
That veray nede unwrappeth al thy wound hid.
Maugre thine hed thou must for indigence
Or stele, or begge, or borrowe thy dispence."

CHAUCER. *The Man of Lawe's Tale.*

THE night was tranquil and starry. The moon shone brightly, and shed its silver light on the snow that decked the gaunt, leafless

trees of the Champs Elysées. But the air was piercing cold, and fell icily on Edith's burning brow. She paced rapidly along the deserted street; her heated imagination conjured up sounds of footsteps that seemed to follow and pursue her. The echo of her own steps alarmed her; she would fain have fled from the sound. She ran, rather than walked, till she reached the more populous Faubourg St. Honoré. She had no purpose, and knew not whither she was hastening, nor where she should seek refuge. Her only thought had been to escape from the scene of her terrors.

But now the reality of her situation alarmed her. Alone, after midnight, in the streets of Paris—what might not befal her? She almost regretted her precipitation; but yet how could she have remained in the

house, where she had met with such gross insult?

Her strength also began to fail her. The reaction of her feverish state was now commencing. Her knees tottered under her, her head grew confused and dizzy, and she shivered violently with the intense cold. At last she could walk no longer; and she sank exhausted on the steps of a small shop, near the English embassy. Her courage abandoned her; she hid her face in her hands, and wept aloud.

Her alarm was increased by the sound of footsteps echoing down the long deserted street, the noise of laughter, and of lively conversation. She next descried two young men advancing towards her arm-in-arm, talking merrily, and smoking their cigars as they returned from some ball.

"Hallo, what's this," exclaimed one of them in English to his companion, as they approached Edith, "what have we here? a pretty girl, by Jove. I don't understand French; ask her, Ernest, what's the matter?"

His companion began to question her in bad French, but Edith stopped him, replying in broken accents:

"I am English, and I have left my home. O, no; not my home—I have no home! I have left the house where I was engaged as governess, for I was grossly insulted, and could stay there no longer. Without a thought I rushed out into the street, and have now no place to lay my head. I am quite unknown here. O what shall I do—what shall I do!" and she burst out into a paroxysm of sobs.

"Poor girl!" said he who had been ad-

dressed as Ernest; "poor girl! how cold and wretched she appears! What is to be done, Henry?"

"Henry!" exclaimed she; "I have loved that name: my best friend upon earth was Henry! For his sake, Sir, have compassion on me, and advise me what to do for shelter this night; for I shall die if I remain here."

"I will do all I can to help you, but really I am puzzled. Every house, every hotel is shut at this hour, and I really do not know where to direct you."

"O! there is no hope for me. I must remain here and perish. O, that I could die now! Then would my misery be ended!"

"Stay; I can make you one proposition," added he, smiling. "My brother is now in England; he and I have an apartment here together. I can offer you his room for to-

night, and to-morrow we will see and lodge elsewhere."

She looked inquiringly into his face, and sought to read there the motive that prompted him to this offer. Was it made with honourable feelings, or was he trying to betray her, as Cosmo had done?

She did not reply.

"I see you are scrupulous," interposed Ernest, "and no wonder. Very few girls would risk themselves to go home with Henry Morden after midnight. But I know him well; and, *roué* as he is, if he makes you a promise, he will abide by it, I am sure."

"Do not fear, poor girl! You hear what Ernest Fielding says of me. I really *do* feel for you; and I promise you faithfully to give you honourable shelter for to-night, and to help you in your search for a lodging to-morrow.

I cannot do less for a young countrywoman in distress. So come along, and fear no harm."

He extended his hand to help her to rise; she seized it in her own, and bathed it with tears.

"God will bless you for this!" she said, in a voice broken with emotion; "God will bless you for this! You are good—I see it—I trust myself to you!"

"Come along then quickly, for you will catch your death of cold here. I am half-frozen already, from standing still. Take my arm, and give me that bundle. Poor girl!" added he, as he took it from her hand, "is this all you have with you? O, you will not take my arm. Very well. Does the smoking annoy you? Only say the word, and I will throw my cigar away."

Edith assured him that she did not mind the smell—that she was accustomed to it.

At the corner of the street, the friends parted; and Edith was left walking alone by the side of Henry Morden.

"Come, come, give me your arm. Who'll see us? and what harm can there be? You can hardly walk. Do I go too fast for you?"

Edith leant on his arm, and both walked on in silence. He turned into one of the many streets that lie between the Faubourg St. Honoré and the Madeleine, and rang at a *porte cochère*, which opened and admitted them into a spacious court-yard.

His apartment was on the second story. When they had reached it, he struck a light, and conducted Edith into his sitting room. It certainly smelt rather strong of

cigar smoke, but it was warm and comfortable, and the heat of the fire that blazed in the grate, afforded her a sensation of delight.

"Now," said he, "let me show you your room. Both yours and mine communicate with this one; yours is there, and mine is here. Sit here as long as you like, and warm yourself well, for in these horrid French houses they put no fire-places in the bedrooms. I am going to bed now. When you are warm go into that room, and lock it if you please," added he, with a smile, "you will find the bed made, and all in readiness, for my brother is daily expected. We shall meet to-morrow at breakfast. Good night."

"Good night—and many good nights to you. Accept my warmest, deepest gratitude." . . .

He interrupted her expressions of thanks, raised her hand to his lips, and then entered his room.

She soon went to bed—and did *not* lock her door. She felt confidence in the word of an English gentleman!

Next morning when Morden rose, he found the door of Edith's room open. He looked in—she was gone.

On the table he perceived a little blue silk handkerchief which she had worn round her neck. Lying on it was a slip of paper, on which she had traced these words—"ETERNAL GRATITUDE."

Edith had slept but little during the few hours she had passed in Morden's house but the very fact of reclining on the bed had been of the greatest service to her. As soon as the sun began to shine in at the window, she rose, dressed herself, and prepared to sally forth again. Willingly would she have left some better token of her gratitude to the kind stranger who had behaved so nobly towards her, but she could think of nothing save the little silk handkerchief, which Morden afterwards found.

"It is not, after all, the value of the gift," thought she, "that will prove the measure of my gratitude. This trifle will suffice to show that his kindness had not been bestowed on an ungrateful object."

She glided silently out of the room, and descended the stairs unobserved. She was rather frightened as she passed the cross-

looking *concierge*, who was sweeping the yard.

Fortunately the gate was open, so she passed through without the questions which, she had feared, might be addressed to a stranger coming out of the house at so early an hour.

She knew not yet where to direct her steps. She thought of an hotel; but she had always heard that these were very expensive, and her purse was very light.

She had received her first quarter's salary from Lady Bewleigh a few days before, else she would have been totally without means. But what could twelve pounds and a few francs do for her in her present situation? And when they were expended, where should she get more? The thought made her shudder!

She walked on, thus meditating, until she

came to a by-street, where she saw the following advertisement stuck against a door:

CHAMBRE GARNIE A LOUER
PRÉSENTEMENT.
(AU CINQUIÈME)
S'ADRESSER AU CONCIERGE.

She thought that this might perhaps suit her. Inexpensive it certainly must be; and here she was likely to escape detection so long as she might remain in Paris.

She rang timidly at the gate, which was opened by a ferocious-looking *portière*, to whom she endeavoured to explain that she wished to see the rooms that were to let. The old woman, whose moustaches might have occasioned envy to many a tyro in the Life Guards, preceded her up an endless flight of stairs, until at last they reached the

very top of the house. Here she pushed open the door of a miserable garret with slanting roof, lighted only by a small sloping window, without blind or curtain. In the centre stood a deal table, which, with a couple of chairs of the same material, formed the entire furniture of the room. Beyond this, a still more wretched closet, dignified with the name of *chambre à coucher*, in which a *lit de sangle*, and a square foot of worn-out carpet, stood in solitary grandeur.

Wretched as was this place, Edith resolved to remain there. She felt quite unable to walk about in search of other apartments, and here she felt certain that she could never be traced.

"What is the charge for these rooms?" inquired she.

"Fifty francs a month," growled the she-dragon.

"Then, if you please, I will engage them for a month from this time."

"O! very well: when do you want to come in?"

"I wish to remain here from this moment."

"Where is your luggage?"

"I have none but what I carry in my hand."

The tone of the woman quite changed when she learned the distress of her new tenant:

"We never take in people without knowing something about them; how do I know that you'll pay?"

Edith took out her purse. The sight of the gold worked a magical effect, and with a courtesey she added:

"Not that I doubt you, Mademoiselle, but we always make it a rule."

Edith interrupted her, placing fifty francs n her hand:

"There is the amount of the first month's rent in advance. Now you will perhaps have the goodness to light the fire, and bring me something to eat, for I am very hungry."

The *concierge* hurried about, and made much fuss in lighting the fire. The chimney smoked, and she was obliged to open the window to make it draw. Then she started off to procure some soup for Edith; delicious soup, she said, which she had just prepared for her own use.

Wearied and exhausted with the fatigues and anxieties of the past night, Edith thought it well to go to bed. The broad daylight that glared in at the shutterless window, prevented her from sleeping for some time, but at last she fell into deep slumber. When

she awoke, she felt pains in all her limbs; her head was burning; she was unable to move out of bed. No bell, and no one within call. She lay there in a high fever for some hours; and glad to her ear was the sound of the old portress's slip-shod gait, as she came up to inquire whether Mademoiselle wanted anything?

"I fear I am very ill," said Edith; "can you send for a doctor?"

The doctor came, and desired her to remain in bed. He found her very feverish, and prescribed cooling draughts and fever medicines.

Edith did not rise from that wretched couch for many days. When she could sit up in a chair by the fire, she requested the doctor to send in his bill, and told him she

could no longer afford to pay for his services.

The bill came. Five pounds!

Five pounds, and two for the hire of the rooms, and two more for what she had eaten, made *nine*. Only three were now left in the purse!

And when these three were spent, what then?

She remained long thus seated before the fire, buried in perplexing thought. She was a girl of firm purpose: she deliberated well before she took a step; but once decided, once convinced that she was acting rightly, she did not flinch, but adhered to her resolve. She saw that there was but one course for her to pursue, and she determined to adopt it.

She took up her pen, and wrote these hurried lines:

"Valerian, if you love me still, come to me. I am in the deepest distress, in abject poverty. Tarry not, it may be too late.

"Yours for ever,

"E. T."

She dated it from the wretched house wherein she lodged, and desired the old portress to post it.

On the very day of her leaving the Rue du Cirque, she had received a letter from Marley. He announced his return to England, after a fruitless search for some clue to his parentage. The monks at the convent in Italy had declared to him that they knew nothing of his history. The old Abbate was dead, and none of the brethren were able to inform him even of the circumstances attending his first entrance into the monastery. He wrote in deep

distress at having no better intelligence to communicate; but he assured Edith of his constant, unchangeable affection; and asked her to answer his letter speedily, and to give him an account of all that had befallen her since they had parted.

Edith felt but one scruple in acting as she now did, and that was the great objection which her aunt had entertained to her marriage with Valerian.

On their way from M— to Brighton, Edith had related to Mrs. St. Meurice the story of her meeting with Marley, and had frankly confessed her love for him, and her desire to become his wife. Florence had shown her that if she married him, it must doom both to a life of penury and want; that she had no money of her own, and that, of course, Henry would be unable to make any provision for her. With the fret-

ful impatience of an invalid, she had refused to listen to poor Edith's arguments, and had not ceased to dwell upon the subject until the moment of her death. But Edith had never made the oft-required promise, that she would not marry Valerian; she now argued within herself that he was the only friend remaining to her in the whole world; and she felt self-justified in calling on him now, in the hour of need, to fulfil his promise, and come to her assistance.

Day succeeded day, and brought no tidings of Valerian. Each morning she expected to receive a letter, or to see him arrive; and each night she lay down to rest in bitter disappointment. Fourteen days had now elapsed since the letter had been despatched. Fourteen long—long days! The purse was—empty!

What could be the cause of this cruel

delay? Had he deserted her? Oh, no, she would not suffer that thought to enter her mind; that were madness—distraction.

Hark! a sound as of a man's footstep on the cracking, wooden stairs. She lived at the top of the house, so he must be seeking her.

"Valerian, Valerian! I am here," cried she, half frantic with joy. "I am here —Ah!"

She opened the door; before her appeared —Cosmo!

CHAPTER VI.

Porteus. I'll force thee yield to my desire.
Valentine. Ruffian! let go that rude uncivil touch;
Thou friend of an ill fashion.

SHAKSPEARE.

EDITH stood aghast. Her limbs shook under her. She had not power to stir from the spot. She could only raise her hand to her forehead and endeavour to collect her thoughts. Was it a dream? No, no, it was a fearful, terrible reality!

She tried to cry out for help, but could utter no sound. Cosmo entered with deter-

mined step, closed the door, and advancing towards her, seized her hand and dragged her into the middle of the room. Then he pushed her into a chair, stood before her, and said with an authoritative voice:

"We have an account to settle, Miss Tyrell. You conquered me the other night; it is now my turn. You caused me to fall and injure my head seriously. Then you inhumanly locked me in, to prevent any one from coming to my assistance. I remained where you left me for several hours, stunned and insensible. When at last the door was forced open, I was carried to bed, where I lay for many days in a state of great danger. Now that I have recovered, I have sworn to be revenged. You made me appear ridiculous, the offence of all others that a man can least pardon. You are now in my power. You have still your

choice. Will you be mine; or must I use violence to obtain what I have resolved to get at any price?"

She answered not a word, but sprang from her seat, and rushed frantically towards the door. He was prepared for this. He darted past her, held her arm with all his might, and prevented her from accomplishing her purpose. Then he turned the key, took it out of the lock, and flung it out of the window, which was partly open.

"Mercy, mercy!—help, help, help!" cried Edith, terrified and distracted.

"Your cries are useless. No one could hear you but the portress, and she is gone upon an errand. I foresaw all, you perceive. Decide—and at once."

Edith fell on her knees before him. "Mercy—mercy—mercy!" this was all she could utter.

"*You* showed no mercy when you were the strongest, nor shall I now show you any mercy. I have sworn to be revenged, and shall fulfil my oath."

Edith rose, mounted a chair, and shrieked out of the window for assistance.

"You do but waste your breath. No one will come. Resign yourself; you have no alternative. Hear me, Edith," added he in a softer voice; "hear me. You love some other, you say, but will he help you now? Where is the favoured Valerian? why is he not here to assist you? He has deserted you. *I* will not desert you. Edith, you must—you shall be mine."

He endeavoured to encircle her waist with his arm. She recoiled from his touch, as from an adder's sting.

"Why resist me? You are weak; I am strong. I am moved only by love for you.

Why seek thus vainly to defend yourself? Yield to my entreaties—to my persuasions. See how wretched you are here! You shall have gold and jewels in plenty; every desire shall be gratified before you know that you have even formed it."

"Silence—silence; I will not hear . . . O mercy—mercy—mercy!"

He again made an effort to embrace her. Edith fled to the far end of the room. He followed, and she again eluded his grasp. At last, he succeeded in seizing her; he clutched her two arms firmly.

"Since it is so; since you will not listen to reason, I will—"

A violent knocking at the door interrupted his sentence.

"Edith," cried a well-known voice from outside; "open—it is I."

With superhuman force she tore herself from his grasp, and screamed:

"Valerian—help—help—break the door—help—mur . . ."

Cosmo placed his hand before her mouth.

"D—n!" cried he, stamping with rage, "hold your cursed tongue!"

The feeble door yielded to the force of a powerful arm; with a loud crash the panel was rent asunder — Valerian stood before them!

"Thank God! Saved—saved—saved!"

She fell senseless on the floor.

"What means this?" said Valerian in a commanding tone; "who are you, and what do you here?"

"I have no account to give any one. Who are *you?* quit this room instantly, or learn—"

"I am this lady's affianced husband, Valerian Marley, who will punish a base scoundrel as he deserves. If you do not instantly leave this room by the door, you shall quit it in another manner. Vile dogs like you find a more fitting exit by the window."

He planted an iron grasp on Cosmo's collar, and twisted his cravat till his face became blue, and his eyes almost started from their sockets.

"Ah! ah! you know now the power of superior strength. Account for yourself, rascal, or I swear I will throw you out into the street below. Or no; I will deign to hear no explanation from you. Give me your name, and your address. You shall hear further from me."

Cosmo faintly gasped out his name.

"Enough; now rid us of your presence."

He still held him firmly by the collar. Cosmo sought to resist, but in vain. His adversary had Herculean strength; and he, though tall, was weak and delicate.

Valerian led him thus on to the landing-place, and then hurled him backwards down the stairs.

"Begone, coward."

When Cosmo could speak, he called out:

"You shall hear further from me. Where may you be found?"

"Here!" and entering Edith's room, Valerian closed the door.

CHAPTER VII.

Τίς τ' ἄρ σφῶε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μαχεσθε?

HOMERI ILIAS.

On the boulevards, between "Tortoni's" and the "Café de Paris," stood in those days, and may still be found, a boy dressed in cap and blouse, whose trade consists in running errands, delivering messages, and the like employments. Nothing can exceed the astuteness and cunning of this *gamin*, who is well known to all who have ever required good service in their *aventures galantes*. No hiding-place is so secret as to be beyond

his power of detection; no indication so vague that he cannot gain a clue to the person sought; and he will, moreover, bring back a correct account of the habits, residence, and haunts of the individual in question; and a thriving trade this in such a city as Paris.

To this worthy Mercury had Cosmo applied, when in quest of poor Edith.

"It is a difficult task," said the employer, as he afforded him all possible particulars respecting the object of his search. "But if you perform it well, and bring me her present address in the course of three days, you shall be well rewarded; for I will take you into my own service, with good wages, and you shall have a groom's dress *à l'Anglaise.*"

This offer was indeed tempting. What would not the boy do to earn the top-boots,

the leather-breeches, the cockade—all the paraphernalia of an English tiger?

So he set to work with his whole energy, and succeeded in tracing Edith to her hiding-place.

Would you know how he effected this? To tell that, one need be another Tortillard,* and his like does not exist.

Certain it is that on the prescribed day, the imp of wickedness brought to Cosmo a detailed account of Edith's present residence; the name of the street, the number of the house, and even the story on which she lived. Cosmo fulfilled his promise, and the "bloused" *gamin* was transformed, by Cosmo's English tailor, into a groom of very respectable appearance.

* This *soubriquet* is frequently bestowed on the boy. It is borrowed from Eugène Sue's "Mystères de Paris."

The day on which he first donned his new attire was an apt one for such a transformation; *the* day, *par excellence*, of the carnival: "Mardi Gras" of the year '46. On that night every theatre is opened to the masqueraders who throng the streets. From the Opera-house down to the *Funambules*, no theatre is without its *Bal Masqué*. It was on that very day that Cosmo encountered Valerian in Edith's room. He returned home, as may be supposed, in an uncommonly ill-humour, and when Tortillard asked permission to go to the masquerade, he peremptorily refused, in a tone that made the shrewd boy feel that further appeal was useless.

He did not, however, distress himself much. The question had been asked for form's sake, but he had well determined, should he meet a denial, to avail himself of

that sort of leave which is proverbially peculiar to his nation. He, Tortillard, the famed interpreter of the *cancan*, not go to the ball on Shrove Tuesday! especially now that he had got a charming dress all ready to appear in! He resolved to be there at any price; even though, by his disobedience, he should forfeit his new place.

His master went out to dinner, and returned home early. Tortillard saw that something unwonted had occurred from Cosmo's excitement, and hasty manner as he desired him to leave the room, and not to disturb him on any account.

The *gamin* had no intention of so doing. He slipped quietly out of the hall door, said a few words to the *concierge*, (whose good graces he had taken care to obtain, by affecting a great love for her cats, and bringing her baby sticks of barley-sugar),

and sallied forth to the scene of riot and licentiousness. His dress created quite a sensation. He passed it off as a costume, and it was voted *mirobolant*, *ébouriffant*, &c.

He remained there till an early hour in the morning. He knew he could not gain admittance to his master's house during the night, so he formed the plan of amusing himself until the servants should be stirring in the Rue du Cirque, and then trusting to the discretion of his friend the porter to admit him unobserved.

About seven o'clock on the following morning, Master Tortillard took up his position outside the *porte cochère* of Lord Bewleigh's residence, with the intention of slipping in behind any one who should go out. The morning was dark and frosty, and the poor fellow's teeth chattered with the

cold. For half an hour he waited in vain, no sign of stirring was visible. At last—O, moment of delight—the click of the *cordon* is heard, the door opens, and a tall figure hurries out. So great is this man's agitation, that he catches his foot in the lower part of the woodwork, and narrowly escapes a fall. A square box drops from his hand, and strikes the pavement with violence. The lid flies open, and the contents are scattered on the pavement. Tortillard profits by the confusion, and slips in at the open door unseen by any one, but not so quick as to prevent him from recognising the tall figure —Cosmo; in the contents of the box—two pistols.

He runs across the yard, finds the hall door unlocked, and makes his way straight to his master's room.

"What can be the cause of his going out

so early? And the pistols—what are they for?"

He hopes to gratify his curiosity by visiting Cosmo's apartment, where he may find some clue to the mystery.

The room is in great disorder. The occupier has evidently been busy there all night, for the candles have burnt to the socket, and in the fire-place there is a mass of ashes formed by burnt paper. On the table stands a cup containing oil, and on the floor a quantity of tow blackened with gunpowder.

Tortillard had wonderful facility in what is termed guessing eggs when he saw shells. His master had gone to fight a duel. With whom? What about? These questions perplexed him sadly.

He examined the writing-table. The ink was upset, an unwiped pen lay across the

blotting-book, and was scarcely dry. He must have been writing! He opened the blotting-book, and to his delight found there a letter in his master's hand. The address was written in English, but he could read just enough to discover that it was for Lord Bewleigh. Here was a prize—a prize indeed.

"Ah, ha! *mon p'tit m'sieu!* you wanted to spoil my fun last night, I'll spoil yours for you to-day. Your father shall get this letter sooner than you intended. *Vengeance! Vengeance!*"

Armed with this letter he darted off to Lord Bewleigh's bed-room, and knocked loudly at the door. Without waiting for permission, he rushed up to the bed-side, crying:

M'sieu! M'sieu! Mr. Cosmo is gone out to fight—to fight a duel. He left this letter

for you. Make haste, make haste—you will be too late!"

"To fight! good heaven!" cried Bewleigh, "give me the letter: draw the curtain."

He sat up in bed, and hastily perused the paper.

"'In case I don't come back'—'insulted'—'line regiment'—'fight'—'*Bois de Boulogne* at eight o'clock'—'tell you all the particulars'—'don't know the fellow'—'Captain . . . Captain Valerian'—'Marley' . . . "

The wretched man uttered a groan, and fell back senseless. Tortillard, much alarmed, filled a glass with water and threw it in his face. This revived him—"Oh, God!" cried he, "that name—Va . . Valerian . . . Marley—where did he come from? O, Valérie!—O, retribution!" he gave a convulsive shudder,

—" O, God! this very night, this very night! . . . "

* * * *

In a secluded spot, near the *rotonde*, a place where many such scenes occur, might be seen, on the same morning, three men in close conversation.

" I have no second," says one. " I only arrived in Paris yesterday, and do not know a person in the town. But it matters little. One of us only will return from this place, and your second must act for both."

The other, and shorter of the three, began to measure the ground. He then loaded the pistols.

" How about firing?" he inquired of one of the principals. " Since I have no colleague, you must settle the matter between you."

"I prefer," said the one who had not yet spoken, "that we should draw lots for the first shot. Each will thus have an equal chance and a better aim."

The second took a handful of coin out of his pocket. "Odd or even?"

"Even," said the first speaker.

The pieces were counted, the number was thirteen.

"The first shot and choice of place belong to my friend."

The fortunate one took up his position with his back to the sun, which was just beginning to appear above the horizon.

"I will clap my hands thrice," said the second, "and on the third stroke you will fire. Are you ready?"

"Quite so."

The duellist raised his pistol, aimed as

well as his trembling hand would permit, and, on the given signal, fired.

He had hit his adversary in the leg, but slightly. The ball had scarcely grazed the skin, and then glanced off.

A cry—a cry of agony that seemed to proceed from some neighbouring spot, rose at this moment loudly in the air. Some bushes were pushed aside with violence, and the figure of a man appeared. He was breathless with running, and darted forward just in time to seize the arm of the wounded man, as he raised his pistol to return his adversary's fire.

"In the name of God, I conjure you,—Hold, don't fire," gasped the old man. "Valerian—Valerian Marley . . . I command you to drop that pistol."

"Who is this man?" inquired Valerian of his adversary.

"That man, Sir, is my father," replied Cosmo, "but he has no business here. Shake him off, I await your fire."

"No, no, no, Valerian, if you fire you will commit a crime — the greatest crime you can be guilty of. O! I implore you, say you will not—say you will not murder him."

Marley laid his pistol on the ground. "Sir," he said, addressing Lord Bewleigh, "I am not so barbarous as to kill a son before a father's eyes. "If my adversary will consent to it, I will meet him again."

"No, never—O never! swear—swear you never will!"

"This is more than I can do. He has touched my honour on its tenderest point. He has fired at me—and I will promise no more than to defer this meeting."

"O my strength! my brain—my brain! I am dying! I am dying! O! before I die I must tell all—"

He rather groaned than spoke the following words: "Valerian . . . you are . . . my son! That man . . . is . . . your brother!"

Bewleigh fell lifeless on the ground when he had thus spoken. He lay flat on his face, and appeared quite dead.

This speech had cast consternation into the faces of both adversaries. But Cosmo tried to pass it off with a sneer, and said:

"The man is mad. But while he is in an insensible state you have time to fire. I await your pleasure."

Marley discharged his pistol in the air. "Our account is not settled, Sir, but until this mystery is cleared off, I will proceed no

farther in the matter. If you are not—what he has said, I shall call on you to meet me here again."

CHAPTER VIII.

"This judgment of the heav'ns, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity."

KING LEAR.

FEARFUL indeed was the scene that ensued. Lord Bewleigh, carried home from the scene of the duel, lay motionless on his bed. The stroke that felled him to the ground was one of paralysis. Deprived of speech, of the power of making even a sign, he had a dreadful secret on his mind, which he could not utter. Fearful retribution for a

life of wickedness—for the wrongs which he had inflicted on others, and which now struck him down with terrible rebound!

He knew not yet that the crime of fratricide might not be committed, for Valerian had made no promise! Can the imagination conjure up a picture more awful than that of a man lying on his death-bed, his mind a very whirlpool, his body as of marble! Death might come on him in this state. O fearful, agonizing thought! He might be forced to appear before his Maker, that God whom he had despised, but before the thought of whom he now quaked—with a damning lie in his mouth—perhaps with the crime of fratricide upon his guilty head! O, the truth, the truth! If he could but speak it! His bloodshot eyes rolled wildly in

their orbits. This was the only sign of life apparent.

O suffering! O agony! What torture could equal this!

For three days and nights he lay thus. The doctors feared that the excitement of the brain must cause his death. They asked him questions in writing. He read them, but could not make the slightest sign in reply. Narcotics were administered, but there was no rest for him! O heavy visitation! Who can say that the hand of God is not upon the sinful in this world! Who, that could witness such a scene as this, dare assert that there is not a stern Judge who oft sees fit to hurl His thunderbolts even on the nether earth, to blast the wicked, and teach the children of men by an appalling example!

It was not until the end of the third day that sleep visited Lord Bewleigh's eyelids. A powerful anodyne succeeded in procuring him a few hours of repose. The physician, who had not left his bedside, gladly availed himself of this opportunity to taste a little rest. Lady Bewleigh and Cosmo remained in the house, but their conduct to the sufferer was heartless in the extreme. They sometimes visited his bed, but their appearance seemed only to aggravate the patient's mental sufferings. His eyes rolled yet more fearfully at their approach, and finally the doctor found it necessary to request them to remain absent, as any additional excitement might prove most dangerous. Lady Bewleigh desired the hired nurse to call her if he should speak, or give any evidence of hearing.

On the following morning, the doctor

summoned Lady Bewleigh to her husband's bedside:

"The power of speech has returned, Madam, but his utterance is most indistinct. I can do nothing for him at present. His mind is evidently affected, for his words are most incoherent. If you will watch him for an hour, I will return in that time. You may, perhaps, be able to gather some sense from what he says."

When Lady Bewleigh entered the room, she heard a low moaning sound proceeding from the bed. She sent for Cosmo, and both sat in silence, concealed from his view by the drawn curtain, but sufficiently close to him to hear what he said.

He spoke in a low, muttering tone, and in most painful accents. The listeners could only gather short, broken sentences, scarcely comprehensible.

"Valérie, Valérie—the ball—see how they dance. Ha! ha! how they dance. Come, we must fly—come, quick—we shall be discovered. That noise—De Merly—O, de Merly! See he lies dead—dead—I have killed him. . .

* * * * * *

Off, off! To Italy—carry her down—Valérie—revive, revive. Speak, Valérie, speak! Senseless—but how fast we roll on! The inn, the inn—O, she is dying! Doctor, see how she lies—save her, save her! Speak, dearest, speak. Hush, what does she say? 'Your wife — disgrace!' She faints again —O, she will die—she will die—she will die!"

The wretched man's voice grew louder, as he spoke these words; they were uttered in accents of the deepest woe. He burst into

tears, and lay sobbing for some minutes, then resumed:

"Valérie, you shall be my wife—my lawful wife! Live, live Valérie; live for my sake. See, she revives—she will live! Thank God, thank . . . . . .

* * * * * *

See, the priest comes—you are man and wife. Valérie, you are mine—mine—mine! . . .

* * * * * *

How weak she is . . . O how ill! Poor Valérie . . . She lies on the bed—she is unconscious. Hark, that dreadful cry — she cannot survive it! A son—a son—but she —O she is . . . dead! . . ."

* * * * *

Lady Bewleigh gave a scream and started from her seat. She now began to suspect the dreadful truth. This Valérie . . . Valerian! She drew back the curtain, and stood before her husband.

"O Valérie—you are come back—back—Silence—hush! do not let them know it! He is safe, Valérie—he is safe! He has escaped from the monastery—he lives, Valérie—he lives—our son, our son—my child—my firstborn child—he lives—he lives—he lives!"

* * * * *

The sufferer exhausted with fatigue, sank back heavily upon his pillow. His power of motion was returning by degrees. He had sat up during the last few sentences, and raised his arm towards his wife, whom

in his ravings he had mistaken for Valérie! He now lay as motionless as before.

At this moment the doctor entered the room.

"How is the patient?" he inquired.

"He is in such a state," said Lady Bewleigh, trying to conceal her rage, "that I can stay here no longer. Come with me, Cosmo!"

Was it possible? Had he in his delirium spoken the truth? Had she been deceived? Was Cosmo—was her son—not . . . She trembled at the thought, and shut herself up alone in her room.

Cosmo, half mad, left the house. He went to seek Valerian. For what purpose? wherefore? Perhaps to murder him! In such excitement what might he not do! what crime might he not perpetrate!

A strong composing draught, administered by the physician, succeeded in procuring for the sufferer a night of unbroken sleep. His breathing was heavy, but his slumbers were deep.

On the following morning, when the doctor returned, he had not yet wakened.

"Shall I call him, Sir?" inquired the nurse.

"No, not by any means, sleep is far too precious. I will sit by him, and wait till he wakes of his own accord. You may leave us for the present."

The doctor remained alone with his patient. He sat beside him for more than an hour, but yet he showed no sign of waking. The physician, wearied with much watching, fell asleep in the arm-chair.

He was aroused by a loud cry from the

patient. He started up, and found Lord Bewleigh sitting upright in his bed. Consciousness had returned. He stared for a moment round him, and pressing his hand to his forehead, seemed to have much difficulty in collecting his scattered thoughts. He gave a convulsive start, as though his memory had suddenly returned, and the dreadful truth had flashed upon his brain. He remembered the fearful struggle of the mind with the body, then the cause of his fall—the dreadful scene in the Bois de Boulogne!

He uttered a loud cry, far louder than he had expected, for he did not yet know that his tongue had been loosed. This cry woke the physician.

"Thank God—I can speak now! My son, my son, where are you? Valerian, my son, are you not here?"

The doctor replied: "There is no one here but me. Compose yourself, and I will send for the person you require."

"O make haste—for heaven's sake make haste! I am dying—I am dying! but I must tell. O make haste—in pity lose no time!"

The doctor, not knowing whom he signified by his son Valerian, yet fearing to question him, left the room, with the intention of inquiring in the house where this person might be found.

On the stairs he met Cosmo, and asked him the question. Cosmo strove to appear calm, but he clenched his hands till the nails entered the flesh.

"Yes, yes," said he, muttering to himself, "let him come! I shall then know all, and thus perhaps . . . . The person whom my father inquires for is Captain Marley," then

he proceeded to give him all particulars about his abode.

The doctor went himself in quest of Valerian. Meanwhile Lord Bewleigh remained alone, and in a state of mind which words cannot express. He felt the fever raging within him; and the fear of losing his mental faculties again, and of dying before he saw Valerian, caused him an agony that baffles all description. The hour he passed thus appeared to him as the beginning of eternity.

He heard the door open very slowly.

"Valerian, come to me—O! come to me!"

No answer.

The room was very dark, only lighted by the small gleam of sun that found its way through the chink of the shutter.

Bewleigh fancied he saw the figure of a

man pass between him and the light: he had certainly heard the opening of the door.

"Who is there?"

No reply.

He tried to draw back one of the bed-curtains that were closed all round him, except on the side nearest the door. Vain effort! his arm could not reach so far, and the lower part of his body was still completely paralyzed.

It must have been mere fancy, and a phantom of his heated brain. When would Valerian come? O the moments—the moments—how slowly they pass; and yet how rapidly they are gone! At length the doctor returned, and with him Valerian.

"Go away, Sir," said Bewleigh, hastily, "go away. I have to say to my son what no ears but his may hear."

The doctor retired. Valerian remained alone with the dying man.

"Thank God, you are come at last, I have waited—O! an eternity. I see the hand of God in all this, but I am past all hope of mercy; no hope—no hope for me! Sit down, Valerian, and hear me. My words are counted, but they shall tell the truth. Valerian St. Meurice, you are my son—my eldest son—my HEIR!"

The curtains on the further side of the bed shook as he spoke this word. Both looked round, but could see no cause for this movement. Bewleigh was far too much excited to heed such a trifling occurrence, and proceeded with much difficulty:

"I have few more words to speak. My last hour is come. May God forgive me! O, Valerian! I have hope that He may, if *you* forgive me. If I could leave this bed

I would throw myself at your feet, and never rise until I had your pardon. Go to Bewleigh Hall. Ask for my study. The wall is all divided into small panels. Concealed behind one of them, you will find all the papers required to prove this clearly, beyond a doubt. I pulled that panel down myself one night, walled the documents in, and then replaced it with my own hands. They must have remained there till the end of time. I had hoped they would; but Divine justice would not suffer this. In few words I will tell you the tale of your birth; the proofs of what I advanced, you will find where I have said. O, how my throat burns! I am dying. O, spare me! spare my life till I have told all the truth!

"I ran away with your mother, Valerian; the husband followed us. We fought in the

garden, at midnight—he fell! My life was not safe in Paris, and though your mother was very ill, I lifted her into the carriage, and we started for Italy. When we reached the first stage, she was so unwell that we were forced to remain there, in a wretched inn. There she lay very ill, and delirious. In her ravings she called for her husband, whose name was de Merly. To explain this, and quell suspicion, I assumed the name of Marley, and said I was her husband.

"After many days, she regained her consciousness; but she was weak—O, fearfully weak! we feared she would die from prostration of strength, and excitement of mind. She seemed to have just awakened from a long trance, and the thought of her position—alone with a man who was not her husband, seemed to distract her.

Valerian, I feared to lose her, and I married her. From that day she revived; but she died—O, so soon!—a year and a half from that time—the night of your birth. You were given to a nurse, and for a long time it was not expected that you would live.

"This history had been a secret to all. In the cities where we stayed, we had passed under the name of Marley. That name I gave to you.

"When I heard that you were growing strong, I was in despair. Had you died, no mortal need ever have known the tale. My pride—O! cursed pride!—I was *ashamed* of what I had done. A fearful thought came across me . . . The Evil One entered my heart. If I concealed your birth, who could ever know? . . . I can speak no more! Forgive me! O! in God's

name I implore your forgiveness! I am dying! I am . . ."

His eye became suddenly fixed. His jaw fell, and he sank back heavily upon his pillow.

Valerian exclaimed:

"Father! I forgive you!"

But another voice yet louder exclaimed, in a voice trembling with rage:

"God's curse and mine be on your head!"

Cosmo, who had heard all from his hiding-place, rushed past Valerian, and fled from the room.

Marley seized his father's hand, and looked earnestly in his face.

Not a movement—not a sound.

He was—dead!

* * * *

The city is hushed. Silence reigns around. The brilliant moon sheds a silvery light upon the limpid waters of the Seine. How sweet is this deep silence, broken only by the little ripple of the water, where its rapid course is arrested by the bridge!

How solemn! How peaceful! Who can believe in misery, in crime, when he beholds so placid a scene! Surely all in the world is beautiful, and bright, and pure as the orb that now illumines it. Surely the chaste moon would not deign to cast her rays upon this earth, if sin might here be found.

Yet hark, that cry! that splash! the form of a man has fallen from that moon-lit parapet into the cold, deep waters below!

The sound echoes against the tall, gaunt houses that stand beside the river. Then silence reigns again, and the moon shines

no less brightly, and the water flows no less merrily, though one has seen a deed of darkness, and the other hides the body of the frenzied suicide!

CONCLUSION.

"Habet præteriti doloris secura recordatio delectationem.—CICERO.

Two years have elapsed since the death of Lord Bewleigh and the suicide of Cosmo.

On the broad terrace that surrounds a noble pile, which we well know, sits a happy group.

The sun is shining brightly, and the day is intensely hot. But the terrace is shaded by the house, and a balmy and refreshing breeze brings to this lovely spot the perfume of the magnolias that flower below the parapet.

Dressed in the costume of a sportsman, sits the new owner of the place. He has been fishing in the rapid stream which runs

behind yonder bank of trees. But the sun is scorching, and the trout will not bite. So he, infected with their laziness, has returned home, and is now seated on a low stool at the feet of a lovely woman, on whose knees lies a tiny little mortal, with pretty golden hair, and large, dark eyes. How fond both seem of this little child! See how gently the mother smooths the glossy curls, while the father strives to bring a smile on to its chubby face, by rattling the little coral bells, which the baby tries to seize in its pretty, dimpled fingers.

Has the painter's hand so caught the resemblance that his portrait has been recognised? or must he engrave the names upon the frame? If so, then learn, gentle reader, that the fisherman is no other than Valerian —Lord Bewleigh.

The famous trial for the title is long

over; his right to the inheritance is now established. The distant cousin who disputed the succession with him has lost his cause.

Need it be said that the young mother is Edith—Edith Tyrell—now Edith Bewleigh.

If ever love filled two hearts, surely it has reigned paramount in these. The sceptic is reclaimed—the unbeliever is now a staunch member of our English Church. He has placed his spirit into the guidance of a hand that has used its power gently—but faithfully

But there is just another figure in the picture, and a fine masculine figure i. is. See with what pleasure he gazes on the interesting group before him! He is an intimate friend of this young family; the only one almost that can boast of this distinction.

This form is—Henry Morden's.

Little did he guess, when he sheltered a poor houseless girl found in the streets of Paris, that his hospitality would meet this return!

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

THE END.

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